Encounter

Edited by STEPHEN SPENDER & MELVIN J. LASKY

Paul Klee

112

JANUARY 1963
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Encounter

Edited by STEPHEN SPENDER *and* MELVIN J. LASKY

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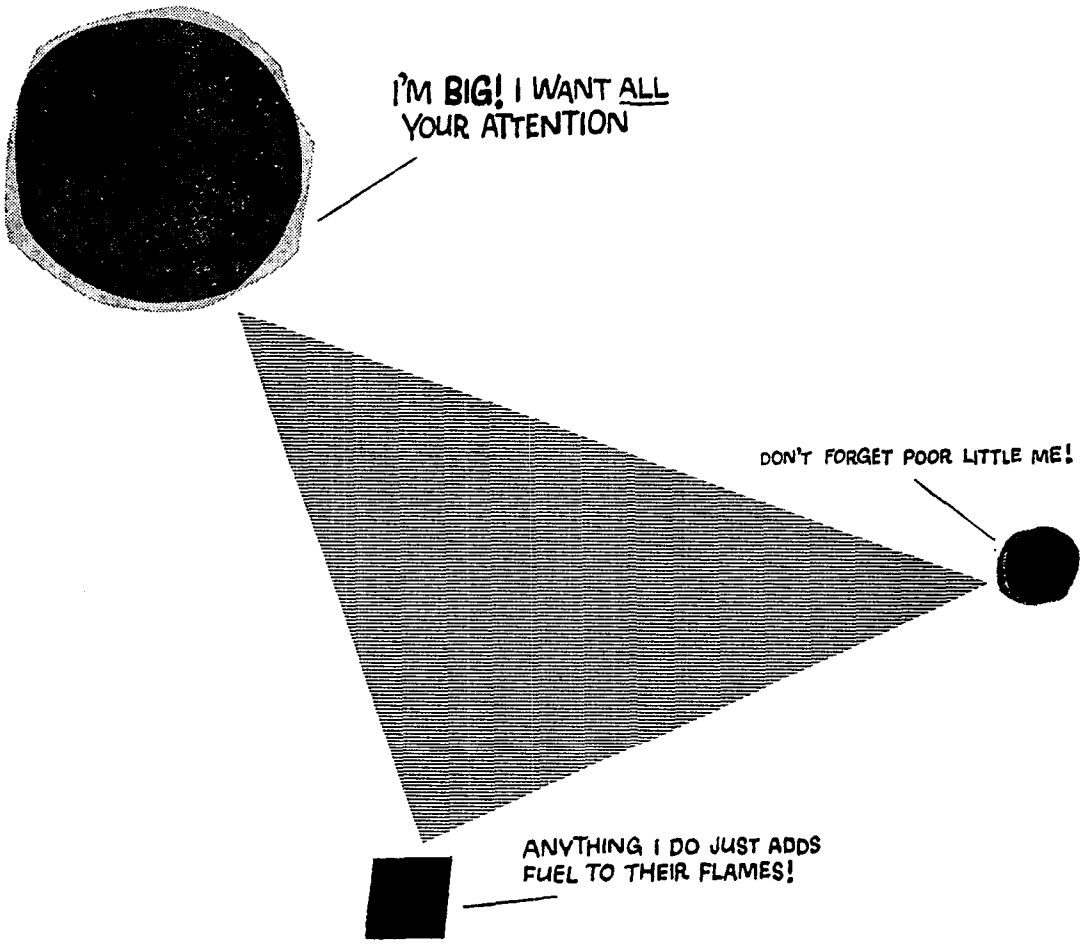

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Tibor Déry

Reckoning

SOME TIME before the main entrance was closed, the student smuggled the tommy-gun into the flat of the Professor of Medicine, hiding it under his mackintosh. He felt no twinges of conscience. He was not even particularly excited. His only fear was that if his emotions carried him away, he might offend the old man. The monumental bare ante-room, which he had known previously only in its daytime form, with corners that vanished into darkness and unapproachable walls, now in the glaring lamp-light suddenly assumed its hidden geometrical shape: it was disagreeably obvious and unfriendly. He hung his head; instead of looking into the professor's face, with its expression of amazement, of one demanding an explanation, he watched, with eyes downcast, the old man's feet which seemed movingly aged and helpless in his clumsy black-laced shoes. The old man was still a head the taller.

"I am disgusted with you, my young friend," said the professor. "I would not have believed you capable of such guile. You turn up a minute before curfew, relying on my not throwing you out on the street after the main entrance is closed."

"Gently, sir," said the student.

"And what right have you to presume that I agree with you?" asked the old man. "And in particular, that our understanding is so perfect as to extend to this vile skin-punching instrument. For what cause could there be, other than the understanding you presume, for your wishing to conceal it with me?"

"Your house will not be searched, sir," said the student.

"Will yours?"

"That is what I have run away from," said the student. "I jumped out of the window."

The old man laughed mockingly: "From the ground floor, eh? And not from the fifth floor?"

The student had no doubt how their conversation would end, he was only afraid that in its tortuous course he might lose patience. He already imagined he felt anger slowly accumulating in his nerves. "So you have come to me direct from the ground floor or the fifth floor, my young friend," said the professor. "It is moving, the brotherly spirit which made you wish to share the danger with me."

"One word and I'll take the thing away, sir," said the student, gazing into the old man's well-loved, gaunt face.

"First, I am appalled by the cool cunning with which you have trapped me. It will take you far in life. Why are you smiling?"

"Perhaps the real cause of your rage is that I've dirtied your floor, sir," said the student with a suppressed laugh. The snow, which had formed a hump on his back, had begun to melt, and trickled on to the floor in the folds of his mackintosh. Round his feet, a small circular puddle, shining in the electric light, had already formed. He knew what painful care the old man bestowed on external cleanliness. It was common knowledge in the university that it was not advisable to have black nails or a dirty shirt when you went to get a certificate signed, or even when you sat in the front rows of the lecture theatre. And now too, late in the evening, alone in his bachelor flat, the professor had opened the door to the student in a blinding white collar and cuffs, and the trousers which showed beneath his long silk dressing-gown had been pressed to a sharp crease.

"I'll wipe it up before I go, sir," said the student with a faint, quivering undertone of mockery.

The old man gazed at the tommy-gun protruding from under the mackintosh.

"I am disgusted with you, my young friend," he said. "Even if, for some reason unknown

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to me, you have the right to assume my sympathy with your trouble-making, how tactless and impertinent to force me to admit it. What is more, you not only extort from me this admission, against my inclination and taste, but you sink so low as to demand instantly—without my approval—my help, my personal participation. You want me to take a risk, defy the law, go to prison, and, in the last resort, to die a martyr's death as well.... I am mis-stating the case, you are not demanding this of me, but forcing it on me directly, appealing to some incomprehensible, stupid moral laws... you are forcing me to go to prison, perhaps to the scaffold, and all this a minute before the entrance is closed, in my own flat, while you smile like an idiot and send streams of slush trickling all over my ante-room, which I had polished yesterday... and finally you have the nerve, as the climax of your puerile prank, to offer mockingly to wipe up this puddle. You make a child wipe it up, if it wets you, don't you? Perhaps you'd even polish it if I asked you?"

"I repeat, one word and I'll take the skin-puncher away, sir," said the student.

"Have you no eye for nuances, my young friend?" asked the professor. "Can you not distinguish between approval and identification? Do you not know that if a man of sixty-two agrees with a man of twenty, the consequences are not the same for both of them? That what is befitting for you is perhaps not befitting for me? That it is for the young man to act, for the old only to judge? Has the passion for play so robbed you of your reason that you cannot distinguish between the obligations of youth and the rights of age? What a wretched picture of the world you seem to have, if you can in all good faith lay a claim to sacrifice my life, or even hazard it, for your insignificant, shallow twenty years.... Yes, it is so, no use looking at me with that stupid sparkle in your eyes! If you dare to exchange a reality in the present, which I have earned, for a handful of promises, with a gay wink, and without a thought, where is the guarantee that you will make them good? Show me just one such dream, which really has as much weight as a thrush's whistle! Till now I liked you for your frankness and courage, though I never esteemed your intelligence very highly. But now I have found, with regret, my dear embryo friend, that you are a crafty coward."

I see, thought the student, he's wearing me down till I get tired of it and take the thing away. Never mind, we're not taken in. But his forehead and ears had reddened.

"Coward?" he asked.

The old man twirled his old-fashioned, thin, silver pencil between his fingers with the same pale, dignified look as in his lectures. By now the wind had quite covered the glass front door with snow, the draught kept on belching up the chimney; in the huge, bare ante-room it grew colder almost from minute to minute.

"A coward, because you don't like facing reality," said the old man. "Mothers are not sacrificed for embryos."

"For a crafty embryo..." said the student.

The professor pointed to the bulge in the mackintosh with his pathetic, thick, white index finger. "Do not jest, please," he said, rebuffing him. "You do not have enough humility towards the world for that. Your choice of weapon already proves your guile. How unmanly it is to use a weapon, with which you can punch a hole in the skin of your fellows, virtually without personal danger! Turning out corpses on a conveyor-belt—is that the ideal of modern youth? With a vile thing like this, you can make away with fifty men, feeling as good as a lord, without risking your own skin. Of course you do not care that it costs you a man's honour. And you dare to bring this perforating-machine into my flat, with a grin on your face, for me to adopt it as my own? Certainly—if you bring a sword, a Toledo blade, which I could regard as an extension of your person, I might keep it as a souvenir, I might shed a tear too, because it would recall my own long-past, youthful folly—yes, my friend, if you charged into the arena with a sword and challenged a tank to single combat, that would deserve some respect, because in the absence of other results, at least it would give us a caricature of the modern world that everybody could understand. Then, perhaps, my opinion of your intellectual powers would change. But how shall I start, I beg you, with a moral formula which brandishes a tommy-gun, which shows its baseness as soon as it encounters one weaker than itself?"

The blood rushed to the student's head. "How do you mean, sir?" he asked, blushing to the roots of his hair.

"A hypocrite into the bargain?" said the old man reproachfully. "You are playing a safe game, young man. You know my irresolute nature and can be certain that I feel far too unsure of myself not to take your side against

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mine in my own mind—even against a wicked embryo like you. My responsibility is thereby lessened, do you understand? You knew for certain that by the end of your visit I should be the weaker. Even with your undeveloped intellectual powers, you had time to learn the psychology of reflection from my behaviour. You have abused my sympathy."

The student suddenly turned on his heels and ran towards the door.

"Feri!" shouted the old man after him.

The student stumbled, and immediately ran on. But even before he reached the door, the old man, taking him unawares, seized him by the shoulder from behind, pulled out the tommy-gun from under his mackintosh and tossed it into the far corner of the ante-room. He opened the door himself, and with the full weight of his tall, bony frame flung out the amazed, terrified boy, for whom—excluding a handshake—this was the first and last physical contact with the professor. "Get out!" he shouted after him, panting slightly. "Do not set foot in here again!"

The gale fanned a flurry of snow from the corridor into the ante-room; a moment later, the ante-room door was slammed on the hesitating heel of the student.

THE FOLLOWING WEEK was passed in a struggle between the professor and his charwoman. At the sight of the tommy-gun lying in the corner the old woman smote her face with her hand and began to whimper, but there was no way of persuading the professor to remove the weapon from the flat, or even to conceal it. He did not even allow her to cover it with a blanket, and one day, when he discovered, on returning from his early morning walk, that she had hung it on the peg under his light overcoat, he tore down the coat in a sudden fit of anger and flung it on the ground. In his old age he could not endure even the most tactful forms of mendacity, pretence, silence, concealment, and he had been really worn out by the pressure of the preceding years. Now, for example, if he imagined himself having to smuggle the weapon out of the flat—the unlawful possession of arms carried a minimum penalty of 10 or 15 years' imprisonment at this time—if he imagined himself hiding it under his coat and stealthily taking it out of the house, in the evening, after dark, in order to meet as few passers-by as possible, but before curfew, so that the porter should not catch sight of him—and carrying it to the banks of the Danube, as far as possible by deserted side-streets, hiding there, walking up and down, peering about to see that he was not being observed from behind a heap of stones or from a window behind his back—if he imagined himself like this, with his head shrunk between his shoulders, his fluttering eyelids moving furtively like a thief's, he was seized by a physical malaise so violent that he began to retch and on one occasion brought up the potato soup which his charwoman cooked for his dinner. Was he bringing up his past or his future?

HE UNDRESSED, had a bath, put on clean underclothes and dressed again. He sat around in the unheated room by the window till midnight, contemplating the ruined house opposite, in which one dark window-frame grinned right into his eyes. In the whole street only one lamp was lit, and that illuminated only the piles of rubble and litter which had grown around it.

"Mary," he said to the charwoman, gazing at his coat, which lay on the floor. "If you hide this weapon from my conscience once more, you will never set foot in this flat again."

"Oh, my God, stop tormenting me!" said the old woman. "If they find it in your flat, they'll lock you up, sir."

"Report me, then we'll get it over more quickly," replied the professor. He turned on his heels and went out of the flat.

The long, narrow street was even more disagreeable by day-light, with the occasional passer-by tripping up among the snow-covered rubble, with whirls of dust which the wind had rolled out from the ruins of collapsed houses leaping about like frogs. Close by the main entrance a municipal dustbin stood, with its lid open: rumour had it that an escaped prisoner had hidden there for two days, until a police patrol had chanced to come across him in a half-frozen condition. By the dustbin, a small mound covered with snow marked a temporary grave, in which the inhabitants of the street had buried some stranger. Further on, a fallen lamp-post lay across the road.

By the time the old man reached Rákóczi Street, a thick fog had descended on the city. Trams and buses were still not running, pedestrians filled the road as well as the pavement, pressing against each other, stumbling behind each other as they rolled in a thick unbroken stream towards the city centre. Anyone moving

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in the opposite direction was caught up in the flood and swept into a side-street. The crowd was hurrying; some were forcing a way for themselves by running; now and again, in their wake, the thin cries of an old woman they had pushed aside swirled about in the fog. In mute silence, with heads down and lips tightly shut, people trod the mud which the cold wind, blowing in from the Danube, crowned with ever new clouds of dust: the gusts dislodged the dust from the rubble of the houses, stirred it in the air, then struck it down on the ground. On the way from the Eastern railway station a long line of lorries cut through the crowd, people jumped out of their way without a word, pushed aside those walking near them, and continued their journey without a curse.

The old man was forced off the pavement. A dense crowd, compact, impenetrable, was queueing in front of a shop with shutters down, and was lashing its speedily growing tail over the pavement on to the road. "What's on sale here?" asked the professor.

"That doesn't matter, father," said a young woman in slacks, with a scarf holding her hair in place.

"Toilet paper, sir," announced a young man standing beside him: the professor remembered the face from the university, but could not put a name to it. The pressure was no less severe at the corner of the Lenin Boulevard. Emke House was burnt down to the ground, only its roofless walls rose up to the winter sky; opposite, the National Theatre had fortunately been hit only once, on the scene-dock side. The Corvin store, too, remained undamaged. Meanwhile the fog lifted, or had been swept on by the force of the wind towards Józsefvaros: Rákóczi Street was now visible as far as the Urania Cinema. The professor cast a look of disgust at his mud-bespattered trousers, and then trudged on slowly. Repair work had already started on the Rókus Chapel; further on, scaffolding had been put up round a block of flats which had suffered minor damage.

In spite of the cold and the wind the market was set up all along Rákóczi Street. Men lived on, with touching zeal, and were buying worn clothes, imitation jewellery, pans and stockings from the obliging hawkers in the doorways, who likewise wished to live on. We are as hardy as bugs, thought the professor dejectedly, and how much more intelligent! Pressing his elbows against his sides, he carefully fought his way through the crowd which surrounded the traders, and was wholeheartedly bargaining with them. Here and there they were already selling Christmas-tree decorations for the festival, which was imminent, with some extra charge in view of the difficult times. The old man would certainly have bought something, if he had had anyone to buy it for. He turned into the Museum Boulevard, where there were fewer people than in Lajos Kossuth Street. A vacuum has strong powers of suction: the old man cut through the deserted ruins of Calvin Square, where a burnt-out tank still lay on the snow-covered road, and made his way towards the bridge. He resolved to cross to Buda. He was unaware that under the distant attraction of the silence, he was unconsciously quickening his step.

BENEATH THE ARCADES of the market-hall a man was measuring out wine from a large-bellied demijohn.

"Five-sixty," he said.

"Five-sixty," repeated the professor.

The wine was cloudy, with a somewhat bitter taste. A few yards further on, they were selling plum brandy at a small table, at 3 forints a glass. The old man drank a thimbleful of this too, but it made him neither more bitter nor happier. He was shown black or white cotton at 30 forints a spool, but he declined these offers with a hesitant movement. He learnt from the conversation of those who were passing beside him that Christmas trees were already on sale on the first floor of the market hall.

"They're already selling Christmas trees on the first floor," a grey-haired woman with a kindly face said to him; she too had stopped for a glass of plum brandy by the open-air stall. "You should buy them now if you've got the money, because later on you only get the left-overs."

"They are selling them on the first floor?" asked the professor.

There were many people walking over the bridge, mostly coming from Buda to Pest. The old man nevertheless stopped on the middle and, leaning over the railings as was his custom, he yielded himself for a minute to the attraction of Death. This time he was seized so strongly that he became giddy, and he pulled himself back instantly. His was a thoughtful, irresolute nature, but he despised flirting with fate. Deep down the river whirled, dark grey; it was not yet frozen over, but near the bank films were already beginning to form, here and there an

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occasional small, semi-transparent piece of ice floated towards him, and disappeared under the bridge, floating on the crest of a wave. The strong wind drew all ten of its claws over the surface of the river. There were many people walking over the bridge; the professor went on. When he noticed that he was cold he thrust both his hands—for a time—into his overcoat pockets. As the wind had blown his hat down into the Danube, his head too began to feel cold beneath his sparse grey hair, which fluttered this way and that. On reaching the end, he hesitated for a moment whether to turn left or right, then, with the houses of Béla Bartók Street giving him shelter from the wind, he trudged comfortably along in the direction of the Körtér.

WHEN HE ARRIVED at Kelenföld Station, already pretty tired, he immediately boarded a train, which had just arrived from the Southern station. He hurried, so as not to have to think. When, in reply to his question, a traveller told him that the train was going to Györ, he nodded assent. "That's right," he said, "good." The train waited in the station a long time; he could have got out to buy a ticket, but he was afraid of having to wait at the booking-office. The train was packed. But in one compartment they nevertheless squeezed up to make room for the old man.

"Going Sopron way?" asked his neighbour, as soon as the train had left the station.

"Yes," said the professor.

"For the pig-killing?"

"I don't understand you," said the professor.

"To relations, for the pig-killing?"

"I have no relations there," said the professor.

The questioner was a young man with a sympathetic face, and a pleasant smile; over the smile he had a thick moustache. "Pig-killing's not good," he said. "They send back 200 men a day, all of whom are on their way to relations for the pig-killing."

The people in the compartment laughed. There were eight in all, in addition to the old man; they had visibly warmed to one another, since leaving the Southern Station. Most of them seemed to be people from the country: the fact that they were well-fed showed that. The train went on, slowly, but still too quickly. The old man looked out through the window watching Gellért Hill as it receded further and further.

"Got a permit to go through the frontier zone?" asked the young man.

"No."

"No matter," said the young man. "You can get it at Györ. Everything for money. When you've got to Sopron... of course it's better if you disappear at Balfürdö or even a station earlier. Are you going to Agfalva or Magyarfalva?"

"I don't know yet," said the old man, "whether I am going to Agfalva or Magyarfalva."

"No matter," said the young man with the smiling moustache, "you'll get addresses at Györ. The thing is though, that the cops mustn't get you before Györ. They're keeping a close eye on this train now. Do you know anybody there?"

"No," said the old man.

"Don't know anybody at Györ? How can that be?" asked an elderly, stout woman in a head-scarf in amazement. "Don't know anybody at Györ?"

"It happens sometimes, people don't know anybody at Györ," said a sour-faced, thin man by the window. "Last time I met somebody like that at Debrecen; he didn't know anybody either."

The people laughed. "Don't you know the Steiners?" asked the old woman in the head-scarf, who did not know what the joke was. "The people who used to have the big bicycle shop in Lajos Kossuth Street?"

The professor turned away his head. "I do not know them."

"Pity," said the old woman. "True, they ran away to America in November."

IT WAS GROWING quickly dark: through the window the snow-covered lands too were greying, but even so their radiance still filled the compartment with a slow glimmer of light. The train was unheated, but the nine people warmed one another in sympathy. In the corridor, a single weak electric bulb burned, from which the light fell on a young married couple sitting by the window; they were obviously from Pest, and were withdrawn into themselves, shut off from the conversation; they spoke, with exaggerated cordiality, only when someone addressed them directly. "Someone left us in November for Vienna," said the old woman in the head-scarf, "as if they were going to the next village, to Abda or Öttevény. He got into a taxi and it took him to the frontier for 500 forints; there he raised his hat and walked over. My nephew went like that too, with the missus

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and his three kids. A week later they sent a message home on the radio that they had arrived safely, thank God."

"When the Pest train arrived at Győr," said another woman, "the conductor went out on to the platform and shouted *'Emigrants change, platform 2.'* Don't let's forget to make a note of the password."

The people laughed. "On the Hegyeshalom train, though," said the man sitting next to the old man, the young man with the smiling moustache, "the driver stopped between Levél and Hegyeshalom on the open line, and the conductor went all the way through the train, shouting *'Emigrants all change.'*"

"There are many going even now," said the old woman in the head-scarf. "I don't know what for. Why, I've read in the paper that there are shows on now in the theatres in Pest."

Someone opened the door from outside, let in a draught of smoky cold, then shut the door again. "Why are you laughing, may I ask?" enquired the lady in the head-scarf of the sour-faced, thin man by the window. "I'm right, aren't I? There's even a show at the Opera; true, only in the morning."

"People are confused," said the other woman, "they don't know what to do. Should they stay —should they go? It's bad either way. There's a famous sportsman living next door to me; he was sent out to the Olympic Games, in America...."

"Australia," said the sour-faced man. "Melbourne."

"Could be," said the woman. "There they promised him a hundred thousand dollars, if he'd stay abroad... but no, he wouldn't stay... this... that... his wife, his child, his mother are in Budapest... he's coming home. And he did come home too, but by then his wife, his mother, and his child had run away to Austria. Now he sits at home in his empty flat and bangs his head against the wall."

The people laughed again. "There are special cases like that," said the smiling man with the thick moustache, who was sitting next to the old man. "At my brother-in-law's, in Pest, there's a young couple living on the second floor of the house—the fellow goes out in the morning and tells his darling wife to pack—he'll get a car for the afternoon, and they'll go to Vienna. In the afternoon a big Csepel lorry draws up in front of the house, packed with people—the driver gets out, goes into the house, rings and tells the woman that her husband's waiting for her downstairs, she must come down at once. So Mummy goes down. The driver pushes her into the lorry from behind, bangs the hood down on her, and off they go—they don't stop till Wiener Neustadt. Yes, but the driver made a mistake and rang at the first floor instead of the second, fetched down some unknown dame with his shouting. Her husband came home from the office in the evening and racked his brains wondering what had become of his wife."

They laughed again. "My God," said the old woman in the head-scarf, "what are they going to do now, poor things? The best thing would be if they swapped partners."

"The best thing would be if they hanged themselves," said an older, grey-haired man, who had not spoken a word until then. "Damn all these slackers who've nothing better to do than to slink off abroad. Why don't they stay at home, blast their eyes! Why don't they help put right the damage they've done?"

"You've got something there," said the second woman.

The grey-haired man turned towards her. "I've got something, have I?" he repeated irritably. "What do you mean, I've got something? When every decent man—don't take this amiss, comrade!—when every decent man is working his head off to set the country in order, that's when they play the look-out man for these lunatics? For the strikers who cause millions' worth of damage to the country every day? For the ex-cops and county-court judges, who want to bring back the landlords and Jewish bankers on us? Let 'em open their bleary eyes. God have mercy on 'em—don't they see our necks are at stake?"

THERE WAS a sudden silence in the compartment. The young man with the smiling moustache looked out through the window. He watched with half-shut eyes the slowly darkening, snowy landscape with the telegraph poles which suddenly dashed at him, and, quickly changing places with one another, had the same effect on the retina as an unbroken drum-roll has on the ear. The others looked away. Suddenly the brutal clatter of the wheels broke through out of the silence. "The comrade and I know each other, I think," said the sour-faced, thin man. "We know each other, don't we? You worked in the police at Győr, right?—in '52 or '53?"

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The grey-haired man did not reply.

"Or was it before '52? In '50 or '49?"

"It wasn't either in '49 or after," said the grey-haired man. "Most of the time under Rákosi and Company, the only place you might have met me was in a cell in the Budapest Central Prison. I was in there for a round 62 months, comrade, not a day less. And I'm not running away even now, though one lung and a kidney have gone west."

The clatter of the wheels became audible again. "My God, let's keep off politics," said the old woman in the head-scarf. "You'll only burn your mouth, sooner or later."

"Are those who clear out keeping off politics?" said the grey-haired man, with a sudden flush in his face. "Or are they the only ones who don't have to keep off politics?" He pressed his fur cap on to his head, leapt up and pushed his way out of the compartment. The young couple from Budapest sitting by the door, terrified, shrank back, drawing in their legs, and looked after him. The glass door slammed. Outside, in the smoky corridor, people were jammed tight; the grey-haired man violently forced a way through them with his elbows. The couple from Budapest turned away their heads again, and stared ahead with a remote expression on their lean faces. "Where are you going?" asked the man with the thick moustache, smiling genially, of a peasant boy who was sitting bolt upright with taut thigh-muscles, and was similarly staring silently ahead, but beneath his prominent, Tartar cheek-bones he smiled readily with the others when he saw their mouths opening to laugh. On his arm he wore a broad black armband, and had a small pork-pie hat on his head. "Sopron," he said.

"And then?"

"No further," said the boy.

"Well," smiled the man with the moustache, "you can speak up bravely here now. We're Hungarians, we stick together. You're not from Sopron?"

"No. Kiskunmajsa, Bács County," said the boy, smiling readily.

"And what are you going to Sopron for?"

"My mother has died," said the boy. "I am going to her funeral."

"In Sopron?"

"She lived there with her elder sister," said the boy, smiling, "since she lost her husband."

"And the funeral's in Sopron?"

The boy lifted up his index-figure to explain. "It wasn't worth it to bring her home," he said. "Counting all the expenses it's cheaper if I take the wreath there."

Above his head, on the luggage-rack, was a small evergreen wreath; everybody looked up. "You're bringing that from home?" asked the young man with the pleasant smile. "You could have got it in Sopron."

"Who knows!" said the boy, smiling. "What if that's the very place where they're sold out now? Only two people were knocked on the head where I live, so there's still some in stock."

Outside, it was now completely dark, thick yellow streaks of sparks drifting back from the engine were fanning out over the fields of snow, until an occasional stronger gust of wind beat them down to the ground. "Why are you keeping your hat on your head, my friend?" asked the man with the smiling moustache, shaking his head disapprovingly. "We're not in a pub."

"He must be taking a sparrow underneath it to Sopron, in case they're sold out of them too there," said the sour-faced thin man. The smiling young man leant forward a little and with a sudden movement lifted the little pork-pie hat off the boy's head. A frightened, faint cry was heard. Out of the hat a blood-stained wad of cotton-wool fell to the ground. On the boy's skull, which was shaved, a bleeding, black swelling as big as a man's fist bulged out; in several places there were broad cuts in the skin and the black, clotted blood, like a complicated network of canals, cut criss-cross into the scalp, which had turned blood-red with the inflammation. The old woman in the head-scarf, terrified, clapped her hand to her mouth. Somebody sighed audibly in the sudden silence, in which again only the clatter of the wheels of the train could be heard. The young wife from Budapest stared, horrified, with round, wide-open eyes at the boy, who watched with a motionless, stiff expression the face of the young man with the moustache, who was smiling warmly.

"Hm!" said the latter, "a good-sized sparrow. Where did you get it?"

"In a pub," said the peasant boy, smiling. "Kindly give me back my hat!"

"You didn't have a scuffle with the law?"

"Excuse me, no," said the boy quietly. "In a pub. Kindly give me back my hat!"

Water had to be fetched, because the young wife from Budapest had fainted. Her husband pushed his way through the people squeezed in the corridor, but either there was no wash-basin in the toilet, or if there was, no water came

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out of it. Meanwhile his wife had been revived by the old woman in the head-scarf with a nip of brandy; by this time the boy had fortunately put his hat on his head again. "The only thing I don't understand," said the young man with the bushy moustache, "is why this journey was so urgent that you didn't even have time to go to the doctor."

"But my mother died," said the boy, smiling.

THE TRAIN slowed down, as if it wanted to have a good look around before drawing into the station. Either the coaches had turned a corner, or the wind had changed, because the streaks of smoke and the streams of sparks which till then had gone past the carriage window, now appeared on the corridor side. Here, in a siding, some snow-covered railway carriages were standing, coupled at the front to an old-fashioned engine with small wheels and a ridiculously long funnel. Behind it the main road, running at right angles to it, was empty as far as the eye could see, on both sides, with an occasional deep snowdrift behind the poplars, which were gesticulating in the storm.

"Bicske?" asked a voice.

"We've passed it already," said the sour-faced thin man.

"Tatabánya?"

But the train did not stop; it accelerated again.

"One thing's certain," said the sour-faced man, addressing the professor, "humanity is in a turmoil all the world over. You are from Budapest, sir, you've surely heard the case of the famous Budapest actor, Cservö József?"

"I had not heard of it," said the old man.

"Go on!" shouted the old woman in the head-scarf, folding her arms over her questioning, ample bosom.

"He came down to us to Györ to run away, too," said the sour-faced man, with a bitter smile. "The roadside inn was his rendezvous with the gentleman who was to have taken him in his car to Vienna."

"I can assure you," interrupted the young man with the pleasant smile and the moustache, "I can assure you, in that inn even to-day you may find a means of transport which you can board without a headache. Of course there are no lorry-routes now, but private cars, and foreign journalists too...."

"Thank you," said the old man. "How do you know I want to run away?"

The young man burst out laughing, and waved his hand.

"I am honoured," said the professor. "Why don't you run away?"

"I manage in this little country," said the young man, smiling. "I've no trouble with anybody here, either above or below. But those who want to go, let 'em go."

"What is your occupation, if I am not being offensive?" asked the professor.

"Now this, now that," said the young man, with a pleasant smile. "I manage for myself. You must respect the authorities, sir; but that goes for abroad as much as for here at home. On the other hand, if I understand the bigwigs here aright, why should I go to a country where they can't even do stewed veal properly?"

"My God, veal!"

"That's what I'm going to have for dinner to-night," said the young man. "I've brought 1½ kilos of leg from Budapest."

"And I've got two lengths of good, strong, rose-coloured cotton," said the old woman in the head-scarf. "True, I queued for it all day."

"In a word," said the sour-faced man, "the artist gentleman dropped in at the roadside inn and ordered ½ litre of mulled wine. When his friend came with the car, they ordered another litre and later, towards evening, heaven knows where from, they got hold of a gipsy too. The artist gentleman sang and wept all night. He could not bring himself to bid farewell to his beloved country. By dawn the next morning they had embraced, staggered out to the car, and set off. They gave the gipsy alone a thousand forints, because they thought that he would certainly be the last gipsy in their lives. But half an hour later they were already seen to be coming back, making straight for Budapest at 70 miles an hour."

The peasant boy with the swelling on his head guffawed loudly; the others too, recovered from their previous alarm, laughed emotionally.

"On the other hand," said the sour-faced man, "there are some who are dead set on this trip, with nothing more than the clothes they're standing up in, no luggage, no nothing"—the old man thought that the man was winking at him—"they're dead set on it, if I may say so, as if their lives depended on it. I know somebody else they caught on the frontier and sent back. He tried a second time, again he only got into a jam, again they sent him off with a return ticket. When he was hooked the third time, the commander of No. 2 Frontier Guard at Csorna,

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a good Hungarian, said to him: "Look here, if I see you again I'll have you put in irons and throw you over the frontier myself."

At Komárom the train stopped for a longer time. The young peasant boy got out for a drink of water. "We'll be in Győr in an hour," said the man with the smiling moustache, yawning, when they had started again. The train rolled slowly out of the station; in the compartment, which was growing drowsy, the howling of the storm outside could be heard. When the police reached the compartment they had already gone through the stop at Ipartelep, which is not more than two kilometres from Győr. In the corridor more frequent motion, stifled, nervous fragments of talk announced in advance the arrival of the law. The sour-faced man leant towards the professor's ear.

"If you really don't know anybody in the town," he whispered, "mention my younger brother—Brátesz György, an agricultural official of the Council. I'll fix it with him."

Since they were sitting in the last carriage, the detectives quickly completed the check. They only cast a glance at the professor's personal papers, which this time he had fortunately not left behind in the pocket of another coat, and gave them back to him without a word. With a slow whistle the train drew into Győr station. Only now did they notice that the young peasant boy had apparently got off the train at Komárom. The wreath for the grave of his mother remained on the empty luggage-rack.

THE STORM grew no calmer towards evening. By the time the old man, with the aid of willing directions from the local inhabitants, had reached the roadside inn, the snow had started, lashing its thick flakes into his face and eyes. The old man's head felt cold. He resolved to buy a hat next day. Where? The little inn was packed, but he did not see a single hat to his liking on the pegs. It is only one step from running away to stealing a hat, but it is a step we do not take!

"I cannot accept your kind offer to smuggle me across the frontier in a Belgian Red Cross ambulance," said the old man to an acquaintance of his, a doctor from Budapest, who had sat down at his table. When he had seen the professor, after a minute's quick calculation, he had suddenly leapt up from his place, left his companions, run to the professor, and greeted him with cordial, but delicately concealed joy. "I cannot accept it, because my nature is full of guile, and I do not wish to contribute to the soothing of your troubled conscience, however little it would take to do that. Further, I cannot accept it, because I do not share your viewpoint that a man can accept from everybody, without discrimination, what they can offer him. I do not wish to strengthen you in your youthful belief, or even in your experience, that you can flay seven skins off one cat. Further . . ."

The old man was suddenly silent. "Enough!" he said irritably. "Let us take it that I did not justify my resolution."

The window under which they were sitting had been completely covered with snow by the wind; it was no longer possible to see through it. No new guests arrived in the snowstorm, which was continually gathering strength. None of the earlier ones ventured into the whistling, howling blizzard outside, which was growing stronger in the chimney and, dragging the smoke with it, was pressing into the bar through the stove door, which would not shut properly. In a circle at the small tables, the people were drinking, quietly smoking their pipes. The radio was being turned off and on all the time.

"All right, dear professor," said the stout doctor from Budapest, laughing, "let us take it that you did not justify your resolution. On the other hand I am delighted to see that since we last met you have lost none of your freshness of outlook and your youthful outspokenness. So you can take a seat in my car without fear. I will not send you the bill."

"I will not take a seat," said the old man.

"You will not take a seat," repeated the doctor from Budapest. "Really, what have I done to you? Is it that once or twice I have been mistaken in my political judgment of the situation and have openly admitted my mistakes?"

"That is it," said the professor. "Why did you not stick to them?"

"Are you making fun of me, dear professor?" asked the doctor, raising his eyebrows over his pale low forehead.

"Of course," said the old man. "I have nothing better to do."

The stout doctor, after a moment's amazed silence in which he pulled back into place his tie which had slipped sideways, and regained his presence of mind, leant over in his excitement so close to the old man's face that the latter smelt his sour breath. "Are you reproaching me for having been taken in by the infernal Rákosi propaganda-machine?" he asked, panting nervously. "You know, the whole country was in

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step with them. Or do you resent the fact that in my justified indignation I drew the obvious conclusions and went into opposition for a short time? Or are you offended with me because I have now accepted a post in the Ministry of Health, guided by the conviction that this country must at last be set in order? Little men like me have only suffered history so far; now the time has come for them to make it themselves. I have outlined to you the reactions of a healthy soul, my dear professor."

"The reactions of a healthy soul?" repeated the old man. "And why do you want to smuggle me out? To cover yourself here too?"

"Out of respect," said the doctor smiling. "Out of human respect. You must have a good reason for running away."

"I have," said the old man.

The stout, pale-faced doctor burst into an exasperated laugh. "Of course! You have had seventeen men executed. You have strangled two with your own hands. Still waters run deep."

The old man felt his head: his hair was beginning to dry. If he went out into the night for a walk, perhaps he would not catch cold.

"What would the world come to, my dear professor, if everybody was a hero?" said the stout doctor. "As it is, we murder quite enough people, primarily of course out of cowardice. But what a permanent slaughter-house the world would become, if everybody clung heroically to his convictions! I will go further: if people in general had any convictions other than this single belief, that they have a right to life. This one belief causes enough nasty business, especially now! Let us not expect more of human nature than it can give, my dear professor! I regard him as an honest man, who can reconcile his needs somehow or other with current demands, that is, who so orders his little life, that as far as possible it shall not suffer through the greed of others . . . who tries, as far as possible for him, to agree with those who are more powerful than he, and does not injure beyond measure those who are weaker. A solid little life, my dear professor, under the ægis of general peace and disarmament. Let us not be frivolous, please! Let us recognise our limits! Let us whistle, if we are afraid in the dark! In my experience, every hero costs, on a conservative estimate, at least a thousand innocent victims, of whom not one would have had any other desire than to be left in peace to crow on his own little dunghill. The murderous instincts of an average man like me can be amply satisfied within his small family circle including, possibly, lodgers and good neighbours. In the depths of his heart everybody honours those who are stronger than he, that is, the authorities. They say that the Lord spits out the lukewarm. It is not true, my dear professor! The Lord expelled Lucifer and delights in him who obeys, for ever and ever, Amen."

"Is that all?" asked the old man.

The doctor from Budapest broke into a smile all over his plump, pale, spongy-skinned face.

"One complains a little, grows a little indignant, grumbles a little within the permitted limits—but having reached those limits, turns one's face towards heaven and with a heart full of gratitude begins to praise the authorities of the time. That is the true *vox humana*, my dear professor."

"Is that all?" asked the old man.

IN THE ROOM the choking mixture of tobacco smoke and the smell of coal became more and more intolerable. An occasional guest who had lost patience got up from his chair and peeped outside the door, but the snow-drift which immediately swept in on the floor and the tablecloth-rending gale prompted him to instant retreat. "Of course, of course, it is not easy to remain honourable," said the doctor with a gesture of resignation, pursing his thick lips. "The lightning speed of tactics with which history flashes demands superhuman flexibility. No wonder we go wrong now and then."

"I repeat the question," said the old man. "Why do you wish to smuggle me over the frontier?"

The doctor leant over the old man's ear. "I shall not be coming back for the time being, either," he whispered. "It has come to my knowledge that my good wife reported me yesterday to the police, because I associated myself with the demands of the young people in October. As you see, my dear professor, you can feel quite safe if you entrust yourself to me."

"Go to blazes!" said the old man. He stood up and moved to another table.

In the morning, through the good offices of a waiter, he climbed on to a lorry, which took him for a thousand forints into the frontier zone as far as the Kapuvár bus-station. Here he boarded the bus, which set off as scheduled on the main road which the gale had swept clean during the night. But scarcely half an hour later, even before Hegykö, they were held up at a

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bend. Half a metre of soft snow had piled up on this section of the road: the bus drove on to it, but was unable either to make its way through or to back off it. The snow started again. It fell so thickly that about noon, when the driver, who had struggled on foot as far as the nearest village, returned with some men with shovels, the wheels were already invisible beneath the snow.

But the old man did not wait for them. With his train-companions, the quiet young couple from Budapest, whom he had come across again in the bus, the wife's sister who lived at Győr, and her four-year-old son, he set out on foot. The young husband, an employee in a general store at Budapest, was carrying two heavy cases. The two women and the old man took it in turns to hold the child in their arms. The young man from Budapest lent the professor his dark blue Swiss cap. It was an hour's journey to the farm where the farmer was to take them across the frontier; but the hour became three hours' heavy walking. They turned off the main road on to one of the roads leading towards the farm and immediately lost their way. Beneath the thick cover of snow the road could no longer be distinguished from the ploughland which surrounded it. First one, then another, sank into the snow up to the knees. The child cried; only in the old stranger's arms did he calm down slightly. The woman from Budapest had to stop frequently; the heavy going was too much for her heart. It was snowing ceaselessly. The journey was easier if the wind caught them from behind, but if it blew in their faces, they had to exert themselves like a swimmer in a river going against the current. Once the young wife from Győr fell into a ditch up to her waist; fortunately when it happened the child was sitting on the professor's back. Having waded across the ditch, they came out again on to the main road, at the same point from which they had started three hours earlier. Even in the thickly falling snow they could clearly make out, a few hundred yards further on, behind the snowdrift, the snow-covered roof of the bus, and that the men shovelling were conversing with the travellers.

"Well, here we are, my children," said the old man gaily.

ON THE MAIN ROAD it is impossible to lose one's way. They set off towards Hegykö, where they would soon engage someone to take them to the farm. They knocked at the first house on the edge of the village, and rested for an hour. The peasant asked for 100 forints per head for showing the way to the farm.

It was a deserted farm, north of Balf, in the marshes of Lake Fertö, far from the main road, at the end of a cart-track, which naturally was now also covered by the snow. But the old man's party now overtook another group on the way, three men and two women, who were plainly making in the same direction and seemed as exhausted as they were; one of the men, leaning on a stick, was limping badly. They caught sight, by a distant row of poplars, of another still longer line of people, which seemed to run towards them diagonally. Behind the regular black trellis of the poplars, beneath the low ceiling of clouds, as it were in a never-ending cage, small human forms, loosely scattered, were moving behind one another in the dirty light of the snow. In the farmhouse itself there were already fifteen or twenty people sitting in the smoky kitchen, crouching on the bench by the fire and on the bed. Only on the floor could the newcomers find room.

The farmer asked for 2,000 forints per head for the route, payable in advance, for children too. He was a stocky, broad-shouldered man, with a bristly face on which fatigue had drawn deep trenches below his eyes. He stood in the door in wellingtons. In his hand was a gun, which even later he did not put down—and with a quietly searching look from under his grey eyebrows he scrutinised individually the new arrivals crowding into the kitchen. His son stood by the door and flashed a torch into the faces of the newcomers. Behind him stood another older peasant, his brother-in-law, who also carried a gun in his hand. No bargaining, said the farmer: he himself had to pass on a large proportion of the money, and not even Christ's tomb was guarded for nothing. It was doubtful whether they could set out that night. He had not yet received a report whether the route was passable. If they postponed setting out until the next night, they must spend the day in the barn. But he could give no one anything to eat. To the question whether it was possible to cross the frontier safely, he shrugged his shoulders. If the route was free from danger, he would not be asking for 2,000 forints. Three days earlier the frontier guard had shot a member of his group, and wounded another, but the others had got through. But in this snowstorm—if they could make a start—perhaps the route would be safer

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than was usual at that time. The frontier guards were reluctant to risk frostbite in an ear or foot.

THE FARMER, in spite of all his surliness, appeared a reliable man; by contrast with the generally hesitant manner of the peasants, he spoke out what was up his sleeve, or at least what was on his tongue. He had scarcely finished his short speech, when the group approaching from the direction of the row of poplars arrived; fourteen newcomers, perhaps even more exhausted than the others. There were many women and children among them, and they had been walking since morning, in snow which in places was up to their knees. There was now not an inch of space in the room; they sat on the earth floor of the kitchen, or lay down, leaning their backs and heads against the tiled fireplace. A mother of three children, one of whose sons had been left behind on the way unnoticed, broke into spasmodic, unrestrained weeping: at the sound of her moans the children in the room grew alarmed and began to whimper, terrified.

Meanwhile the man who had been sent out to study the condition of the snow returned. The four men, who were joined by the farmer's wife, a powerful grey-haired peasant woman in boots, withdrew into a corner of the kitchen and consulted together in low voices; it was noticeable from their gestures and their tone of voice that they did not agree. The woman would plainly have liked to be rid as soon as possible of the wretched swarm of locusts which had over-run her house: clearly she feared that the large number of fugitives who had been converging on the farm in several groups and from several directions in the course of the day had aroused the attention of the frontier guards, and that in spite of the bad weather they would come on them by chance. The four men, however, were visibly loath to risk the journey; their reluctance was quite clearly explained by the repeated plaintive moans and howls of the storm, and by the incessant quivering of the knotted acacia trees which stood before the door. "The roads are not too good," the farmer finally announced in the sudden silence, which was broken only by the occasional cry of a weeping child; the frosty weather too was unfavourable; the journey could not be recommended to women or children. But if there were any among the single men who felt sufficiently strong to start at once, then they could set out in one or two groups, depending on the number of applicants. But only healthy, strong men should come, he added conscientiously, because the weak ones would delay the others; and they would be compelled to leave to their fate any who dropped behind on the way. The 2,000 forints per head was to be paid in advance.

"Anybody who remains lying down on the road to-day will be frozen to death," said his brother-in-law beside him, gun in hand. "And if anybody slips, falls, and breaks or even just sprains his ankle, he should not count on the others being able to take him with them in this storm, and in such deep snow. So think it over well, because Christ is not everyone's friend."

Between fifteen and twenty presented themselves, including a girl in ski slacks and a short fur coat. Her hair was bound with a head-scarf and she carried a rucksack on her shoulders. She had slightly slanting eyes, and protruding cheek bones, and obstinately kept her mouth tight shut. "I have 720 forints," she said to the peasant. "That is all the money I have. If it is not enough for you, I shall cross the frontier a hundred yards behind you for nothing."

The old peasant thoughtfully examined the stubborn young face of the girl. "No bargaining," he said curtly. The girl remained defiantly silent and shrugged her shoulders. "If you go over alone, that of course costs no money," said the peasant after a time, turning his back on the girl.

They divided those who had presented themselves into three groups of six or seven each. The professor set out with the last one, an hour after the first party. The farmer was visibly unwilling to accept him among those going; he surveyed suspiciously the black overcoat on his tall, lean, slightly bent form, his silk scarf, and above it the wrinkles which six decades had drawn on the crumpled, narrow, bony face. "You would do better to wait another day," he said. The old man did not reply; he counted out the money into the hand of the peasant. Before setting off he bade farewell to the general-store employee from Budapest and his family, who were staying on in the farm, and gave the young husband the 3,000 forints which he knew they were short of for their fee. He bought a quarter of a kilo of bread for the journey from the housewife for ten forints.

THE COLD was biting only when they came face to face with the wind. Fortunately it

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did not blow constantly all night, but sometimes desisted for a quarter or half an hour; then their lungs could rest a little and afterwards they could bear with more endurance the blows which the resurgent gusts dealt, crackling and whistling. The storm was sometimes so aggressive that they could regain their breath only by stopping for a minute or two—with legs apart, so as not to be knocked over by its force—and turning their heads back, filling their lungs with air, then turning round cautiously and setting off again with lowered heads, like bulls about to charge. There was of course no protection against the hard snowflakes which were flying with great force and dizzy speed, no means of preventing their penetrating into every opening of the bare face and under scarves and clothes, however tightly done up; eyes, mouth, nose, and ears were filled with snow, and with every new gust you noticed with indignation and surprise that in your annoyance you burst into tears again and again. By the time the tears running down from your eyes had frozen on your face, the next gust of wind had caused new ones to well up.

The storm had at any rate this advantage, that in places it had swept the road clean, or to describe it more accurately, those narrow paths and balks which led among the plough-lands or crackling fields of maize which had also been blown bare. At such times there was no need to look at the ground continuously, and you could devote all your presence of mind and strength to husbanding your breath. On these sections of the road the hard-frozen, crumbling soil appeared beneath the close-shaven layer of snow; feet clung happily to its clods.

There was no sky above the heads of the walkers. Light came only from the moon. The flakes, which were whirling round where the ceiling might be, sometimes flying upwards aslant in the form of a pillar or swooping to the ground like a gigantic swarm of moths, occasionally let a little weak glimmer of light seep through towards the earth. On both sides the broad coverings of snow stood out from the restless darkness with an even, autonomous light. The continuous roar of the wind was almost deafening. "What is the matter?" asked the professor, panting a little, of a man stumbling in front of him, who had suddenly stopped and was looking about hesitantly.

"I can't see," said the man.

"What d'you mean, you can't see?"

"My spectacles are broken."

"Now?"

"At the start of the journey," said the man. "At first I got on somehow, but it seems my eyes have tired. Now I can see nothing."

"Never mind," said the old man. "Take my arm, we'll go together."

On the clear sections of the road they managed quite well, in spite of the narrowness of the path, but whenever they had to wade through a snowdrift, in which they were sometimes buried above the knees, or had to stride across a ditch, they dropped fifty or a hundred yards behind the people ahead of them.

"Trust me!" said the old man panting. "Hold on tight to me. You may as well close your eyes."

The wind roared across the plain with an Ice Age passion.

"What did you say?" shouted the man, turning his mouth towards the professor's ear. "I didn't hear what you said, for the wind."

ON SOME SECTIONS of the journey snowdrifts two or three metres deep rose up; they had to go round them and then find their way back again to the snow-covered path. The danger was that if they dropped too far behind and lost sight of the people ahead of them, they would lose their way. Footprints were buried by the blizzard in an instant. Fortunately the six men ahead of them—including the farmer's son, the leader of the group—on one occasion halted for a longer time; from afar it seemed as if they were examining some object lying on the ground. It was the frozen body of an elderly man, which was leaning against a tree in a sitting position. When they moved it from its place, it fell on its back, with knees raised up towards the sky, like a wooden doll. It was already stiff, it could not be straightened out from its immodest posture, and since it was dead, did not deserve to have much time wasted on it.

They had already, earlier on, met the scattered débris of the great migration. A hundred yards or so behind the farm, a car which had broken down stood upright, embedded in the snow, which was now up to its windows. On the edge of a maize field the outline of an overturned motor-cycle showed beneath the covering of snow; it had probably been abandoned only an hour or two before. They also found an empty, much-patched rucksack and a large, open pigskin handbag, whose contents had clearly been removed by the previous parties; only a bundle

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of papers tied up with ribbon and a comb with a long handle showed through the snow beside it.

A few minutes after they had left the body, the professor was relieved of the task of assisting the blinded man. Seeing the two clinging together, a youth went up to the old man and offered him his arm. "A mistake, young man," the professor said to him, irritably. "I am supporting, not being supported. If you would be so kind as to take my place for a while. . . ."

He was tired; he found it even harder to keep pace with this group composed mostly of vigorous young men. It was near midnight. They had already reached the swamp round Lake Fertö, where the going was even heavier, because beneath the covering of snow there ran thin layers of ice in places, and if you sank into the snow, or if the ice underneath broke, your shoes plunged into the squelching thick waters of the swamp, which immediately enclosed them and dragged them down still further. The old man's thin city shoes submitted to these tests reluctantly. His silk scarf, which was wound round his neck, had long ago become wet through, and stuck to his neck like a cold compress; his leather gloves too were soaking with the snow that thrust its way into them. He took both scarf and gloves off and threw them away. His shirt and collar were drenched from above by the slush dripping on them, from below by his own perspiration.

The nearer they drew to the immediate frontier zone, the northern area, glimmering in the light of the snow, grew more and more populous. The even rustling of the reeds in the gale was at times interrupted by a heavier force, and behind the swaying stems—instead of the expected, invisible gust—the thicker outlines of stooping human forms emerged, moving forward. Naked white faces looked out of the blades of vegetation which were as tall as men. "If you recognise a God," a woman's tired voice began to speak in the darkness, immediately beside the old man, "take this little girl with you. I can't go on." A student took the child into his arms, but at a nervously harsh admonition from the leader, they were compelled to leave to her fate the woman, who had sat down on the stump of a tree with another woman. "Go, go," she said, "there is nothing wrong with me. It's just that we're dead tired, both of us. If we can rest for half an hour and don't have to carry the child, then we can go on alone."

"Where's the child's father?" asked somebody.

"Go, go!" said the woman, weeping. "Take care of the child! God bless you. Her name is Bálint Etus, don't forget it! Make a note of it! We'll look for you in a minute. You're good people, you won't leave her, will you? Under her blouse, tied to her neck. . . ."

Apparently the other woman nudged her, because she was suddenly silent.

"Go now!" said the other woman. "Go!"

"Where is the child's father?" asked the old man.

"Go now, God bless you!" said the other woman, weeping loudly. "The child's name is Bálint Etus. Go, please, never mind us!"

Since the leader was threatening to turn back and go home if they delayed any longer, the group moved on again. "The frontier guards don't come much down here into the swamp," explained the young peasant. "But when they patrol the main Fertörákos road, they sometimes shoot into the reeds at random, when they think of it, so as to frighten people." The man whom his father had mentioned before, who had been shot in his group, had caught such a blind bullet in his head, right between the eyes, while a woman had been wounded in the arm.

FOR A TIME the snow had stopped, and the gale too suddenly slackened. The journey, however, became more and more difficult, or the people weaker: every minute they sank up to their ankles in the soft, powdered snow, or even deeper into the mud which lay concealed beneath the snow. The task of lifting your feet out of this thick, sticky dough, and of propelling them forward again, together with the snow and mud that had stuck to your shoes, cost, at every step, an exertion and concentration of the will equal to that of an athlete preparing to break the record in the long jump. The muscles, saturated in lactic acid, would not obey. No one had a dry place on his body the size of the palm of his hand; the perspiration on the brow froze on to the face, burning.

It grew unexpectedly lighter. For a minute the moon shone through the flying clouds and the leader, looking continually to his left and right and incessantly turning back in a nervous manner, urged the people to press on more quickly. In the moonlight the black human forms moving on the white plain could be seen from afar. After less than a quarter of an hour,

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a sudden loud barking was heard on the left, presumably from the direction of the main road, and was immediately followed by some long-drawn-out shouts. The snow-covered land resounds over a great distance, and the barking police dog was clearly several kilometres away. But the possibility had to be reckoned with, that they were on the track of the group ahead, which had set out half an hour earlier—though neither could the more favourable possibility be excluded, that they were pursuing other fugitives hiding in the reeds. The moon shone forth again. The leader listened: there were no more shouts to be heard. When the first shot rang out, he cursed himself: even on Christmas Eve they did not leave people in peace. But the dog was silent. It was possible, said the leader, that his uncle had shot it: that was why they carried guns, not for use against men. The moon shone forth again. Another shot rang out, then a third, and a few minutes later the barking of the dog could be heard again. When a police-dog picks up the scent, it follows the trail silently until it reaches what it is looking for; only then does it give voice. The moon shone forth again, but this time from another direction.

While the leader consulted with the people, who had gathered round him, the old man, who had fallen twice on the way through fatigue and dropped a good way behind the others, rejoined the group. This time he had a companion: the young peasant boy with the black arm-band, with his little pork-pie hat on his blood-stained head. He had suddenly emerged from the reeds, with a newly-acquired evergreen wreath on his arm, and joined him.

"Why are you carrying that wreath?" asked the old man.

The boy was silent. "I think they let you into the frontier zone with it," said the old man. "But it cannot be of any use to you here, my boy."

"I am taking it to my mother's grave," said the boy, smiling.

"Now you can safely throw it away," replied the old man. "They won't let you cross the frontier with it."

The moon shone forth again. At the request of the leader the people took off their coats and trousers, in spite of the biting cold. In white pants they were less exposed to the danger of being seen from afar. Most of them folded their outer garments and carried them into the reeds; they would get a change of clothes over there. The old man dropped behind again. He was disinclined to cross the frontier in his shirt-sleeves and pants. He disliked arousing pity. All his life, hitherto, he had studiously avoided stripping in front of strangers. The young peasant remained with him, out of modesty or because he wanted to keep his clothes; his wreath he had thrown away already, at the instance of the professor.

The people were by now a burden to the old man. He wanted to be alone in that solemn moment, when he left his country forever, when he rose from the grave—or entered his grave? He sent the young boy on ahead, and sat down on a heap of snow. The small group to which he belonged—the last!—was now invisible. In their white underclothes they had disappeared on the snow-covered plain. The little thin, black form of the boy, too, was receding further and further into the distance. The old man was cold. He rubbed his skull to quicken the circulation in his scalp, tapped with numb feet on the snow. He had already thrown away the Swiss cap he had borrowed; it had been soaked through. The moon shone forth again, its faint hydrogenated light floating over the dead country. There was silence.

YOU CANNOT remain alone in the Sopron marshes at night, in ten degrees below freezing, thought the old man starting up in annoyance when he caught sight of the stubborn-mouthed young girl with the ski slacks and the rucksack, coming out of the parting reeds. She had followed them as the rearguard of the last group, at a distance of fifty or a hundred yards, as she had stated, for the whole time —for nothing! She will cross the frontier for nothing too, thought the old man. "What do you want from me?" he asked, in an angry whisper, because he was so hoarse that he could scarcely hear his own voice. "What is the matter? Why are you standing about here in front of me?"

"You mustn't stay sitting down in this cold, professor," said the girl, knitting her young brows," "however tired you are.... Get up, please!"

"How do you know me?" asked the old man.

"Get up, please!" repeated the girl with her impatient, stubborn mouth. "My God, you haven't even got a sweater! Get up, please!"

The old man looked for a time at the girl's pale young face and infinite pity took possession of his heart. "How do you know me?" he asked, in a hoarse whisper.

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"Get up, please!" said the girl. "From the university—I studied philosophy."

"To my knowledge I give no lectures in the Faculty of Philosophy," said the old man.

The girl shrugged her shoulders impatiently. "Get up, please!" she said. "I am engaged to Kovács Feri, your student, sir."

"Feri?" repeated the old man. "The one who presented me with a gun the other day?"

"Yes," said the girl.

"And now where is the beloved wandering about?" asked the old man. "Is he skiing in the Tyrolean mountains? Or at Engadine? And you now hurrying urgently after him? Why has he left you behind here?"

"For God's sake, sir, why are you running away?" asked the girl, involuntarily lowering her voice. Her lips trembled. "At your age? Why, you'd done nothing, sir."

"Of course I had," said the old man. "I had hidden a gun."

"Don't be funny!" said the girl. "Feri hid that in your flat."

"I should have reported it," said the old man.

The girl pursed her stubborn lips: her eyes flashed with rage.

"Look here, young woman!" said the old man. "Master Feri knew precisely why he hid that vile object in my flat, because Master Feri is not blind, is not deaf, and has not contracted softening of the brain. Why did he not hide it with my colleague Snarler, or my colleague Spy, or my colleague Hyde? Why with me? Because he lives near me? Because he knows that I like him? Really! The cause of this action was his doubtless reasonable and justified conviction that I agree with him."

"But, sir...."

"Silence!" said the old man sternly. "You say that I did not use that gun? I as good as used it. If I did not actually use it, the sole reason was that it was unbecoming to my years, or that I do not understand the mechanism, or that it is repugnant to my taste. I virtually used it, kindly understand! I used it with my every unexpressed thought, with my every unspoken word, with every atom of my being. It was used by others in my place, on the basis of tacit consent. And I am also responsible for the occasion when it was misused—just as Master Feri—and you too, young woman—and everybody in this country is responsible for what happened, for what happened before that and will happen after this. Not only little Baldhead* is responsible! One must accept responsibility, young woman. So I should go with a ridiculous gun under my arm to the police and give myself up? That they might forgive me and send me home? I don't want them to forgive me!"

"But sir, you really didn't do anything," said the girl in despair.

The old man laughed mockingly. "I did nothing?" he repeated. "That is why I am running away."

"Professor, sir, get up!" shouted the girl. "Your face is already blue."

"Spare yourself the trouble, young woman," said the old man impatiently. "Just go on nicely ahead. We will meet in the Tyrolean mountains."

The girl continued to stand in front of him. The moon shone forth again. The wind flicked a finger into the reeds, which rustled a little; then silence returned.

"Do not disturb me, young woman!" said the old man. "Be good enough to leave me alone! What right have you to intrude into my life? Honour, charity, you say? Do you wish to use me as a ridiculous example in order to repair what a whole country has neglected for a century? No, young woman, this people has not yet atoned for the past and the future. And do you imagine that if you take my arm with that dirty little hand of yours which is frozen red, carry me across the frontier and save my valuable life, that you will be repairing anything that way? Or that I can repair anything over there? Suppose I do not wish to? It cannot be repaired, young woman, nothing can be repaired. The dead cannot be resurrected, wounds can only appear to be healed. One must live honourably, young woman, not make reparation! Or do you imagine that it will not be possible to live here honourably again? Now leave me alone, please! Offer your Samaritan services to such as are better capable of appreciating them. There must surely still be people deserving of pity, here or over there, go seek them! Go, please, before I smack your face."

HE WAITED for the narrow form of the girl to disappear among the dark reeds, then got up and set off slowly. He staggered along for another hour, or perhaps two hours. His turned-up coat collar, which was soaked through and had now frozen as hard as a board,

* *i.e.*, Rákosi.

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chafed his skin till it bled. When he fell once again, he was perhaps near the frontier, only a few hundred yards, because he noticed some yellow, vaporous sparkling above the snow, which he found after a long, absent-minded examination to be the light of a mighty Christmas tree. It was Christmas Eve, a white Christmas. For a time he remained lying on the ground. With a great effort he could still have crawled on all fours under the Christmas tree, but he had no taste for this disgraceful exhibition. Let us stay in this little country! Shots sounded from a great distance, then, somewhat nearer, the receding rattle of a motor-cycle. The old man struggled to his feet, turned his back on the frontier, and as it were symbolically retraced his steps a few paces, towards the interior. He sat on the edge of a ditch filled with snow. He was very tired. He scarcely felt the cold any more.

He closed his eyes and yawned again and again. Incipient degeneration was his diagnosis, after feeling his pulse several times. He knew the process. Fatigue, sleepiness, breathing becomes faint. The muscles grow stiff; that too makes breathing more difficult. The amount of carbon dioxide in the poorly oxygenated blood steadily increases. Disturbances appear in the metabolism, the body temperature control fails. Visual and aural hallucinations follow. The functioning of the heart grows irregular, with frequent extrasystole. The temperature in the rectum drops steadily; when it reaches 24 degrees, there is nothing practical that can be done. The liver ceases to produce glycogen, the blood sugar falls. The heartbeats grow ever fainter. The pulse becomes intermittent and imperceptible. When the blood sugar necessary for the nutrition of the organism falls to nil, the end comes.

Watch This Space

When they placed in position de Witter's "Adam and Eve"
On the front of the Marriage Counsel Office block—
Two low-relief panels with a space between,
Two oblong verticals, asymmetrical—the shock
They gave us was (presumably)
Something to do with his cock
And her petals. Both showed, certainly.
But even after they'd been taken down
And his knocked off and hers smoothed in,
Their modified presences still disturbed our town.
What is it about them? We don't believe
In this of course, but isn't it odd
That in the uncarved space between the figures, some god,
Some kind of superstition, appears to stand
Guarding a silence with an empty hand?

P. J. Kavanagh

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Herbert Gold

A Dog in Brooklyn, a Girl in Detroit:

A Life Among the Humanities

WHAT BETTER CAREER for a boy who seeks to unravel the meaning of our brief span on earth than that of philosopher? We all wonder darkly, in the forbidden hours of the night, punishing our parents and building a better world, with undefined terms. Soon, however, most of us learn to sleep soundly; or we take to pills or love-making; or we call ourselves insomniacs, not philosophers. A few attempt to define the terms.

There is no code number for the career of philosophy in school, the Army, or out beyond in real life. The man with a peculiar combination of melancholic, nostalgic, and reforming instincts stands at three possibilities early in his youth. He can choose to be a hero, an artist, or a philosopher. In olden times, war, say, or the need to clean out the old west, might make up his mind for him. The old west had been pretty well cleaned up by the time I reached a man's estate, and Gary Cooper could finish the job. Heroism was an untimely option. With much bureaucratic confusion I tried a bit of heroic war, got stuck in the machine, and returned to the hectic, Quonset campus of the G.I. Bill, burning to Know, Understand, and Convert. After a season of ferocious burrowing in books, I was ready to be a Teacher, which seemed a stern neighbour thing to Artist and Philosopher. I took on degrees, a Fulbright fellowship, a wife, a child, a head crammed with foolish questions and dogmatic answers despite the English school of linguistic analysis. I learned to smile, pardner, when I asked questions of philosophers trained at Oxford or Cambridge, but I asked them nonetheless. I signed petitions against McCarthy, wrote a novel, went on a treasure hunt, returned to my roots in the Middle West and stood rooted there, discussed the menace of the mass media, and had another child.

By stages not important here, I found myself teaching the Humanities at Wayne University in Detroit. I am now going to report a succession of classroom events which, retrospectively, seems to have determined my abandonment of formal dealing with this subject. The evidence does not, however, render any conclusion about education in the "Humanities" logically impregnable. It stands for a state of mind and is no substitute for formal argument. However, states of mind are important in this area of experience and meta-experience. However and however: it happens that most of the misty exaltation of the blessed vocation of the teacher issues from the offices of deans, editors, and college presidents. The encounter with classroom reality has caused many teachers, like Abelard meeting the relatives of Eloïse, to lose their bearings. Nevertheless this is a memoir, not a campaign, about a specific life in and out of the Humanities. Though I am not a great loss to the History of Everything in Culture, my own eagerness to teach is a loss to me.

NEWS ITEM of a few years ago. A young girl and her date are walking along a street in Brooklyn, New York. The girl notices that they are being followed by an enormous Great Dane. The dog is behaving peculiarly,

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showing its teeth and making restless movements. A moment later, sure enough, the dog, apparently maddened, leaps slavering upon the girl, who is borne to earth beneath its weight. With only an instant's hesitation, the boy jumps on the dog. Its fangs sunk in one, then in the other, the dog causes the three of them to roll like beasts across the sidewalk.

A crowd gathers at a safe distance to watch. No one interferes. They display the becalmed curiosity of teevee viewers.

A few moments later a truckdriver, attracted by the crowd, pulls his vehicle over to the kerb. This brave man is the only human being stirred personally enough to leave the role of passive spectator. Instantaneously analysing the situation, he leaps into the struggle—*attacking and beating the boy*. He has naturally assumed that the dog must be protecting an innocent young lady from the unseemly actions of a juvenile delinquent.

I recounted this anecdote in the classroom in order to introduce a course which attempted a summary experience of Humanities 610 for a monumental nine credits. There were a number of points to be made about the passivity of the crowd ("don't get involved," "not my business") and the stereotypical reaction of the truck driver who had been raised to think of man's best friend as not another human being but a dog. In both cases, addicted to entertainment and clichés, the crowd and the trucker could not recognise what was actually happening before their eyes; they responded irrelevantly to the suffering of strangers; they were not a part of the main. This led us to a discussion of the notion of "community." In a closely-knit society, the people on the street would have known the couple involved and felt a responsibility towards them. In a large city, everyone is a stranger. (Great art can give a sense of the brotherhood of men. Religion used to do this, too.) "Any questions?" I asked, expecting the authority of religion to be defended.

An eager hand shot up. Another. Another. Meditative bodies sprawled in their chairs. "Are all New Yorkers like that?" "Well, what can you do if there's a mad dog and you're not expecting it?" "Where does it say in what great book how you got to act in Brooklyn?"

I took note of humour in order to project humorousness. I found myself composing my face in the look of thought which teevee panellists use in order to project thinking. I discovered a serious point to elaborate—several. I mentioned consciousness and relevance and the undefined moral suggestion implied by the labour which produces any work of art or mind. A girl named Clotilda Adams asked me: "Why don't people try to get along better in this world?"

Somewhat digressively, we then discussed the nature of heroism, comparing the behaviour of the boy and the truck driver. Both took extraordinary risks; why? We broke for cigarettes in the autumn air outside. Then, for fifty minutes more, we raised these interesting questions, referring forward to Plato, Aristotle, St. Thomas, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, William James, and De Gaulle; and then boy, dog, girl, truck driver and crowd were left with me and the crowned ghosts of history in the deserted room while my students went on to Phys Ed, Music Appreciation, Sosh, and their other concerns. Having been the chief speaker, both dramatist and analyst, I was exalted by the lofty ideas floated up into the air around me. I was a little let down to return to our real life in which dog-eat-dog is man's closest pal. Fact. Neither glory nor pleasure nor power, and certainly not wisdom, provided the goal of my students. Not even wealth was the aim of most of them. They sought to make out, to do all right, more prideful than amorous in love, more security-hungry than covetous in status. I saw my duty as a teacher: Through the Humanities, to awaken them to the dream of mastery over the facts of our lives. I saw my duty plain: Through the Humanities, to lead them toward the exaltation of knowledge and the calm of control. I had a whole year in which to fulfil this obligation. It was a two-semester course.

Before she left the room, Clotilda Adams said, "You didn't answer my question." Fact.

Outside the university enclave of glass and grass, brick and trees, Detroit was agonising in its last big year with the big cars. Automation, dispersion of factories, and imported automobiles were eroding a precarious confidence. Fear was spreading; soon the landlords would offer to decorate apartments and suffer the pain. Detroit remembered the war years with nostalgia. Brave days, endless hours, a three-shift clock, insufficient housing, men sleeping in the all-night, triple-feature movies on Woodward and Grand River. Though the area around the Greyhound and Trailways stations was still clotted with the hopeful out of the hill country of the mid-south and the driven from the deep

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south—they strolled diagonally across the boulevards, entire families holding hands—some people suspected what was already on its way down the road: twenty per cent unemployment in Detroit.

THE SEMESTER continued. We churned through the great books. One could classify my students in three general groups, intelligent, mediocre, and stupid, allowing for the confusions of three general factors—background, capacity, and interest. This was how we classified the Humanities, too: ancient, medieval, and modern. It made a lot of sense, and it made me itch, scratch, and tickle. Series of three form nice distinctions. According to Jung and other authorities, they have certain mythic significances. The course was for nine credits. All the arts were touched upon. We obeyed Protagoras; man, just man, was our study. When I cited him—"the proper study of man is Man"—Clotilda Adams stirred uneasily in her seat. "By which Protagoras no doubt meant woman, too," I assured her. She rested.

Now imagine the winter coming and enduring, with explosions of storm and exfoliations of gray slush, an engorged industrial sky overhead and sinus trouble all around. The air was full of acid and a purplish, spleeny winter mist. Most of Detroit, in Indian times before the first French trappers arrived, had been a swamp and below sea level. The swamp was still present, but invisible; city stretched out in all directions, crawling along the highways. Though Detroit was choked by a dense undergrowth of streets and buildings, irrigated only by super-highways, its work was done with frantic speed. The Rouge plant roared, deafened. The assembly lines clanked to the limit allowed by the UAW. The old Hudson factory lay empty, denuded, waiting to become a parking lot. Then the new models were being introduced! Buick! Pontiac! Dodge! Ford and Chevrolet! Ford impudently purchased a huge billboard faced towards the General Motors Building on Grand Boulevard. General Motors retaliated by offering free ginger ale to all comers, and a whole bottle of Vernor's to take home if you would only consent to test-drive the new Oldsmobile, the car with the... I've forgotten what it had that year. All over town the automobile companies were holding revival meetings; hieratic salesmen preached to the converted and the hangers-back alike; lines at the loan companies stretched through the revolving doors and out on to the winter pavements. But many in those lines were trying to get additional financing on their last year's cars. The new models were an indifferent success despite all the uproar of display and Detroit's patriotic attention to it. Searchlights sliced up the heavens while the city lay under flu.

Teachers at Wayne University soon learn not to tease the American Automobile. *Lèse* Chrysler was a moral offence, an attack on the livelihood and the sanctity of the American garage. Detroit was a town in which men looked at hub caps as men elsewhere have sometimes looked at ankles. The small foreign car found itself treated with a violent Halloween kidding-on-the-square, scratched, battered, and smeared (another Jungian series of three!). A passionate and sullen town, Detroit had no doubts about its proper business. All it doubted was everything else.

I OFTEN FAILED at inspiring my students to do the assigned reading. Many of them had part-time jobs in the automobile industry or its annexes. Even a Philosopher found it difficult to top the argument, "I couldn't read the book this week, I have to *work*," with its implied reproach for a scholar's leisure. But alas, many of these stricken proletarians drove freshly-minted automobiles. They worked in order to keep up the payments, racing like laboratory mice around the cage of depreciation. Certain faculty deep thinkers, addicted to broad understanding of the problems of others, argued that these students were so poor they *had* to buy new cars in order to restore their confidence. The finance companies seemed to hear their most creative expressions, not me. Deep in that long Detroit winter, I had the task of going from the pre-Socratic mystics all the way to Sartre, for nine credits. Like an audio-visual monkey, I leapt from movie projector to records to slides, with concurrent deep labour in book and tablet. We read *The Brothers Karamazov*, but knowing the movie did not give credit. We studied *The Waste Land*, and reading the footnotes did not suffice. We listened to Wanda Landowska play the harpsichord on records. We sat in the dark before a slide of Seurat's "La Grande Jatte" while I explained the importance of the measles of *pointillisme* to students who only wanted to see life clear and true, see it comfortably. Clotida Adams said that this kind of painting hurt her eyes. She said that there was

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too much reading for one course—"piling it on. This isn't the only course we take." She said that she liked music, though. Moses only had to bring the Law down the mountain to the children of Israel; I had to bring it pleasingly.

We made exegeses. I flatly turned down the request of a dean that I take attendance. As a statesmanlike compromise, I tested regularly for content and understanding.

THEN, ON A CERTAIN MORNING, I handed back some quiz papers at the beginning of class. Out on the street, a main thoroughfare through town, it was snowing; this was one of those magical days of late winter snowfall—pale, cold, clean, and the entire city momentarily muffled by the silence of snow. The room hissed with steam heat; a smell of galoshes and mackinaws arose from the class. "Let us not discuss the test—let us rise above grades. Let us try to consider nihilism as a byproduct of the Romantic revival——" I had just begun my lecture when an odd clashing, lumping noise occurred on Cass Avenue. "Eliot's later work, including *The Four Quartets*, which we will not discuss here...."

But I was interrupted by a deep sigh from the class. A product of nihilism and the romantic revival? No. It was that strange tragic sigh of horror and satisfaction. Out in the street, beyond the window against which I stood, a skidding truck had sideswiped a taxi. The truckdriver had parked and gone into a drugstore. The cab was smashed like a cruller. From the door, the driver had emerged, stumbling drunkenly on the icy road, holding his head. There was blood on his head. There was blood on his hands. He clutched his temples. The lines of two-way traffic, moving very slowly in the snow and ice, carefully avoided hitting him. There were streaks of perforated and patterned snow, frothed up by tyres. He was like an island around which the sea of traffic undulated in slow waves; but he was an island that moved in the sea and held hands to head. He slid and stumbled back and forth, around and about his cab in the middle of the wide street. He was in confusion, in shock. Even at this distance I could see blood on the new-fallen snow. Drivers turned their heads upon him like angry Halloween masks, but did not get involved. Snow spit at his feet.

No one in the class moved. The large window through which we gazed was like a screen, with the volume turned down by habit, by snow, by a faulty tube. As the teacher, my authority took precedence. I ran out to lead the cab driver into the building. An elderly couple sat huddled in the car, staring at the smashed door, afraid to come out the other. They said they were unhurt.

I laid the man down on the floor. He was bleeding from the head and his face was a peculiar purplish colour, with a stubble of beard like that of a dead man. There was a neat prick in his forehead where the union button in his cap had been driven into the skin. I sent a student to call for an ambulance. The cab driver's colour was like that of the bruised industrial sky. "You be okay till the ambulance——?"

Foolish question. No alternative. No answer.

We waited. The class was restless. When they weren't listening to me, or talking to themselves, or smudging blue books in an exam, they did not know what to do in this room devoted to the specialised absorption of ideas. Silence. Scraping of feet, crisping of paper. We watched the slow-motion traffic on the street outside.

The cab driver moved once in a rush, turning over face down against the floor, with such force that I thought he might break his nose. Then slowly, painfully, as if in a dream, he turned back and lay staring at the ceiling. His woollen lumberjack soaked up the blood trickling from one ear; the blood travelled up separated cilia of wool which drew it in with a will of their own. There was a swaying, osmotic movement like love-making in the eager little wisps of wool. An astounded ring of Humanities 610 students watched, some still holding their returned quiz papers. One girl in particular, Clotilda Adams, watched him and me with her eyes brilliant, wet, and bulging, and her fist crumpling the paper. I tried by imagining it to force the ambulance through the chilled and snowfallen city. I saw it weaving around the injured who strutted with shock over ice and drift, its single red Cyclop's eye turning, the orderlies hunched over on benches, chewing gum and cursing the driver. The ambulance did not arrive. Clotilda Adams' eye had a thick, impenetrable sheen over it. She watched from the cab driver to me as if we were in some way linked. When would the authorities get there? When the medics? There must have been many accidents in town, and heart attacks, and fires with cases of smoke inhalation.

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BEFORE THE AMBULANCE arrived, the police were there. They came strolling into the classroom with their legs apart, as if they remembered ancestors who rode the plains. Their mouths were heavy in thought. They had noses like salamis, red and mottled with fat. They were angry at the weather, at the school, at the crowd, at me, and especially at the prostrate man at our feet. He gave them a means to the creative expression of pique. (Everyone needs an outlet.)

Now Clotilda Adams took a step backward, and I recall thinking this odd. She had been treading hard near the pool of blood about the cab-driver, but when the cops strolled up, she drifted toward the outer edge of the group of students, with a sly look of caution in her downcast, sideways-cast eyes. Her hand still crisped at the returned exam paper. This sly, lid-fallen look did not do her justice. She was a hard little girl of the sort often thought to be passionate—skinny but well-breasted, a high hard rump with a narrow curve, a nervous mouth.

The two policemen stood over the body of the cab driver. They stared at him in the classic pose—one cop with a hand resting lightly on the butt of his gun and the other on his butt, the younger cop with lips so pouted that his breath made a snuffling sound in his nose. They both had head colds. Their Ford was pulled up on the snow-covered lawn outside, with raw muddled marks of tread in the soft dirt. When the snow melted, there would be wounded streaks in the grass. The cab driver closed his eyes under the finicking, distasteful examination. At last one spoke: "See your driver's licence."

The cab driver made a clumsy gesture towards his pocket. The cop bent and went into the pocket. He flipped open the wallet, glanced briefly at the photographs and cash, glanced at me, and then began lip-reading the licence.

The cab-driver was in a state of shock. There was a mixture of thin and thick blood on his clothes and messing the floor. "This man is badly hurt," I said. "Can't we get him to the hospital first?"

"This is only your *driver* licence," the cop said slowly, having carefully read through Colour of Hair: *Brn*, Colour of Eyes: *Brn*, and checked each item with a stare at the man on the floor. "Let me see your chauffeur licence."

"He's badly hurt," I said. "Get an ambulance."

"Teach'," said the older cop, "you know your business? We know ours."

"It's on the way," said the other. "Didn't you call it yourself?"

"No, one of the students. . . ." I said.

He grinned with his great victory. "So—don't you trust your pupils neither?"

SHAME. I felt shame at this ridicule of my authority in the classroom. A professor is not a judge, a priest, or a sea captain; he does not have the right to perform marriages on the high seas of audio-visual aids and close reasoning. But he is more than an intercom between student and fact; he can be a stranger to love for his students, but not to a passion for his subject; he is a student himself; his pride is lively. The role partakes of a certain heft and control. There is power to make decisions, power to abstain, power to bewilder, promote, hold back, adjust, and give mercy; power, an investment of pride, a risk of shame.

Clotilda Adams, still clutching her exam, stared at me with loathing. She watched me bested by the police. She barely glanced, and only contemptuously, at the man bleeding from the head on the floor. She moved slightly forward again in order to participate fully in an action which apparently had some important meaning for her. She had lost her fear of the police when she saw how we all stood with them. The limits were established.

The police were going through the cab-driver's pockets. They took out a folding pocket-knife and cast significant looks at it and at each other. It had a marbled plastic hilt, like a resort souvenir. It was attached to a key ring.

"Hey!" one said to the half-conscious man. "What's this knife for?"

"Where'd you get them keys?" the other demanded, prodding the cabbie with his toe.

"A *skeleton* key. These cab companies," one of the cops decided to explain to Clotilda Adams, who was standing nearby, "they get the dregs. Hillbillies, you know?"

I said nothing, found nothing to say. I now think of Lord Acton's famous law, which is accepted as true the way it was uttered. The opposite is also true—the commoner's way: Having no power corrupts; having absolutely no power corrupts absolutely.

The bleeding seemed to have stopped. The cab driver sat up, looking no better, with his bluish, greenish, drained head hanging between his knees. His legs were crumpled stiffly. He

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propped himself on his hands. The police shot questions at him. He mumbled, mumbled, explained, explained.

"How long you been in Detroit? How come you come out of the mountains?"

"Why you pick up this fare?"

"What makes you think Cass is a one-way street?"

Mumbling and mumbling, explaining and explaining, the cab driver tried to satisfy them. He also said: "Hurt. Maybe you get me to the hospital, huh? Hurt real bad."

"Maybe," said one of the cops, "maybe we take you to the station house first. That boy you hit says reckless driving. I think personally you'd flunk the drunk test—what you think, Teach'?"

I sent one of the students to call for an ambulance again. In the infinitesimal pause between my suggestion and his action, an attentive reluctant expectant caesura, I put a dime in his hand for the call. One of the cops gave me that long look described by silent movie critics as the slow burn. "They drive careful," he finally said. "It's snowing. They got all that expensive equipment."

THE SNOW had started again outside the window. The skid-marks on the lawn were covered. Though the sky was low and gray, the white sifting down gave a peaceful village glow to this industrial Detroit. Little gusts barely rattled the windows. With the class, the cops, and the driver, we were living deep within a snowy paper-weight. I felt myself moving very slowly, swimming within thick glass, like the loosened plastic figure in a paper weight. The snow came down in large torn flakes, all over the buildings of Wayne University, grass, trees, and the pale radiance of a network of slow-motion super-highways beyond. Across the street a modern building—glass and aluminium strips—lay unfinished in this weather. Six months ago there had been a student boarding house on that spot, filled with the artists and the beat, the guitar-wielders and the modern dancers, with a tradition going all the way back to the Korean war. Now there were wheelbarrows full of frozen cement; there were intentions to build a Japanese garden, with Japanese proportions and imported goldfish.

My student returned from the telephone. He had reached a hospital.

The cab driver was fading away. Rootlets of shock hooded his eyes: the lid was closing shut. A cop asked him another question—what the button on his cap stood for—it was a union button—and then the man just went reclining on his elbow, he slipped slowly down, he lay in the little swamp of crusted blood on the floor. You know what happens when milk is boiled? The crust broke like the crust of boiled milk when a spoon goes into coffee. The cop stood with a delicate, disgusted grimace on his face. What a business to be in, he seemed to be thinking. In approximately ten years, at age forty-two, he could retire and sit comfortable in an undershirt, with a non-returnable can of beer, before the colour teevee. He could relax. He could *start* to relax. But in the meantime—nag, nag, nag. Drunk cabbies, goddam hillbillies. The reckless driver on the floor seemed to sleep. His lips moved. He was alive.

Then a puffing intern rushed into the room. I had not heard the ambulance. The policeman gave room and the intern kneeled. He undid his bag. The orderlies glanced at the floor and went back out for their stretcher.

I stood on one side of the body, the kneeling intern with his necklace of stethoscope, and the two meditative cops. On the other side was the group of students, and at their head, like a leader filled with wrath, risen in time of crisis, stood Clotilda Adams, still clutching her exam paper. There were tears in her eyes. She was in a fury. She had been thinking all this time, and now her thinking had issue: *rage*. Over the body she handed me a paper, crying out, "I don't think I deserved a *D* on that quiz. I answered all the questions. I can't get my credit for Philo of Ed without I get a *B* off you."

I must have looked at her with pure stupidity on my face. There is a Haitian proverb: Stupidity won't kill you, but it'll make you sweat a lot. She took the opportunity to make me sweat, took my silence for guilt, took my open-mouthed gaze for weakness. She said: "If I was a white girl, you'd grade me easier."

GUILT, a hundred years, a thousand years of it; pity for the disaster of ignorance and fear, pity for ambition rising out of ignorance; adoration of desire; trancelike response to passion—passion which justifies itself because passionate.... I looked at her with mixed feelings. I could not simply put her down. In order to *put down*, your own mind must be made up, put down. She had beauty and dignity, stretched tall and wrathful, with teeth for biting and eyes for striking dead.

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"But I know my rights," she said, "*mister*. My mother told me about your kind—lent my father money on his car and then hounded him out of town. He's been gone since fifty-three. But you can't keep us down forever, no sir, you can't always keep us down—"

She was talking and I was yelling. She was talking and yelling about injustice and I, under clamps, under ice, was yelling in a whisper about the sick man. She was blaming me for all her troubles, all the troubles she had seen, and I was blaming her for not seeing what lay before her, and we were making an appointment to meet in my office and discuss this thing more calmly, Miss Adams. Okay. All right. Later.

The police, the doctor, the orderlies, and the injured cab driver were gone. The police car out front was gone and the snow was covering its traces. The janitor came in and swept up the bloodstains with green disinfectant powder. The frightened couple in the cab were released. They all disappeared silently into the great city, into the routine of disaster and recovery of a great city. I dismissed the class until tomorrow.

THE NEXT DAY I tried to explain to Miss Adams what I meant about her failing to respond adequately to the facts of our life together. Her mouth quivered. Yesterday rage; today a threat of tears. What did I mean she wasn't *adequate*? What did I know about adequate anyhow? Nothing. Just a word. Agreed, Miss Adams. I was trying to say that there were two questions at issue between us—her exam grade and her choice of occasion to dispute it. I would like to discuss each matter separately. I tried to explain why putting the two events together had disturbed me. I tried to explain the notions of empirical evidence and metaphor. Finally I urged her to have her exam looked at by the head of the department, but she refused because she knew in advance that he would support me. "White is Right," she said.

"Do you want to drop out of the class?"

"No. I'll stay," she said with a sudden patient, weary acceptance of her fate. "I'll do what I can."

"I'll do what I can too," I said.

She smiled hopefully at me. She was tuckered out by the continual alert for combat everywhere. She was willing to forgive and go easy. When she left my office, this smile, shy, pretty, and conventional, tried to tell me that she could be generous—a friend.

WE HAD COME to Thomas Hobbes and John Locke in our tour through time and the river of humanities. I pointed out that the English philosophers were noted for clarity and eloquence of style. I answered this question: The French? Isn't French noted for clarity? Yes, they too, but they were more abstract. On the whole. In general.

The class took notes on the truths we unfolded together. Spring came and the snow melted. There was that brief Detroit flowering of the new season—jasmine and hollyhocks—which, something like it, must have captivated the Frenchman Antoine de la Mothe Cadillac when he paused on the straits of Detroit in 1701. University gardeners planted grass seed where the patrol car had parked on the lawn. The new models, all except the Cadillac, were going at mean discounts.

"The 'Humanities,'" wrote Clotilda Adams in her final essay, "are a necessary additive to any teacher's development worth her 'salt' in the perilous times of today. The West and the 'Free World' must stand up to the war of ideas against the 'Iron' Curtain." This was in answer to a question about Beethoven, Goethe, and German romanticism. She did not pass the course, but she was nevertheless admitted on probation to the student teacher programme because of the teacher shortage and the great need to educate our children in these perilous times. Of today.

HUMANITIES 610 provided ballast for the ship of culture as it pitched and reeled in the heavy seas of real life; I lashed myself to the mast, but after hearing the siren song of grand course outlines, I cut myself free and leaned over the rail with the inside of my lip showing.

It would be oversimplifying to say that I left off teaching Humanities merely because of an experience. Such an argument is fit to be published under the title "I was a Teen-Age Humanities Professor." I also left for fitter jobs, more money, a different life. Still, what I remember of the formal study of Truth and Beauty, for advanced credit in education, is a great confusion of generalities, committees, conferences, audio-visual importunities, and poor contact. "Contact!" cried the desperate deans and chairmen, like radio operators in ancient war movies. And much, much discussion of how to get through to the students. How to get through? Miss Adams and Mr. Gold, cab

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driver and Thomas Hobbes, policemen and the faceless student who paused an instant for a dime for the telephone—we all have to discover how relevant we are to each other. Or do we *have* to? No, we can merely perish, shot down like mad dogs or diminished into time with no more than a glimpse of the light.

Words fade; our experience does not touch; we make do with babble and time-serving. We need to learn the meaning of words, the meaning of the reality those words refer to; we must clasp reality close. We cannot flirt forever, brown-nosing or brow-beating. We must act and build out of our own spirits. How? How? We continually need new politics, new cities, new marriages and families, new ways of work and leisure. We also need the fine old ways. For me, the primitive appeal to pleasure and pain of writing stories is a possible action, is the way in and out again, as teaching was not. As a teacher, I caught my students too late and only at the top of their heads, at the raw point of pride and ambition, and I had not enough love and pressure as a teacher to open the way through their intentions to the common humanity which remains locked within. As a writer, I could hope to hit them in their bodies and needs, where lusts and ideals are murkily nurtured together, calling to the prime fears and joys directly, rising with them from the truths of innocence into the truths of experience.

The peculiar combination of ignorance and jadedness built into most institutions is a desperate parody of personal innocence, personal experience. Nevertheless, education, which means a drawing out—even formal education, a formal drawing out—is a variety of experience, and experience is the only evidence we have. After evidence comes our thinking upon it. Do the scientists, secreting their honey in distant hives, hear the barking of the black dog which follows them? Will the politicians accept the lead of life, or will they insist on a grade of *B* in Power and Dominion over a doomed race? We need to give proper answers to the proper questions.

Particular life is still the best map to truth. When we search our hearts and strip our pretences, we all know this. Particular life—we know only what we *know*. Therefore the policemen stay with me: I have learned to despise most authority. The cab driver remains in his sick bleeding: pity for the fallen and helpless. And I think of Clotilda Adams in her power and weakness; like the cops, she has an authority of stupidity; like the victim of an accident, she is fallen and helpless. But some place, since we persist in our cold joke against the ideal of democracy, the cops still have the right to push people around, Clotilda is leading children in the Pledge of Allegiance. We must find a way to teach better and to learn.

A Patio

So with afternoon
the two or three colours of the patio grew weary.
The great friendliness of the full moon
no longer inspires the usual firmament.
Today the sky is sharp and will tell
of an augury announcing the death of an angel.
Patio, directed sky and dome.
The patio is the window
through which God watches souls.
The patio is the slope
on which heavens scatter on home.
Serene
eternity waits at the crossroads of stars.
How beautiful to live in humble friendship
with eaves, a porch and a well.

Jorge Luis Borges

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ART

The Blot and the Diagram

By Kenneth Clark

I HAVE BEEN told to "look down from a high place over the whole extensive landscape of modern art." We all know how tempting high places can be, and how dangerous. I usually avoid them myself. But if I must do as I am told, I shall try to find out why modern art has taken its peculiar form, and to guess how long that form will continue.

I shall begin with Leonardo da Vinci, because although all processes are gradual, he does represent one clearly marked turning point in the history of art. Before that time, the painters' intentions were quite simple; they were first of all to tell a story, secondly to make the invisible visible, and thirdly to turn a plain surface into a decorated surface. Those are all very ancient aims, going back to the earliest civilisations, or beyond; and for three hundred years painters had been instructed how to carry them out by means of a workshop tradition. Of course, there had been breaks in that tradition—in the fourth century, maybe, and towards the end of the seventh century; but broadly speaking, the artist learnt what he could about the technique of art from his master in his workshop, and then set up shop on his own and tried to do better.

As is well known, Leonardo had a different view of art. He thought that it involved both science and the pursuit of some peculiar attribute called beauty or grace. He was, by inclination, a scientist: he wanted to find out how things worked, and he believed that this knowledge could be stated mathematically. He said "Let no one who is not a mathematician read my works," and he tried to relate this belief in measurement to his belief in beauty. This involved him in two rather different lines of thought, one concerned with magic—the magic of numbers—the other with science. Ever since Pythagoras had discovered that the musical scale could be stated mathematically, by means of the length of the strings, etc., and so had thrown a bridge between intellectual analysis and sensory perception, thinkers on art had felt that it should be possible to do the same for painting. I must say that their effort had not been very rewarding; the modulus, or golden section, and the logarithmic spiral of shells are practically the only undisputed results. But Leonardo lived at a time when it was still possible to hope great things from perspective, which should not only define space, but order it harmoniously; and he also inherited a belief that ideal mathematical combinations could be derived from the proportions of the human body. This line of thought may be called the *mystique* of measurement. The other line may be called *the use* of measurement. Leonardo wished to state mathematically various facts related to the act of seeing. How do we see light passing over a sphere? What happens when objects make themselves perceptible on our retina? Both these lines of thought involved him in drawing diagrams and taking measurements, and for this reason were closely related in his mind. No painter except perhaps Piero della Francesca has tried more strenuously to find a mathematical statement of art, nor has had a greater equipment for doing so.

But Leonardo was also a man of powerful and disturbing imagination. In his notebooks, side by side with his attempts to achieve *order* by mathematics, are drawings and descriptions of the most violent scenes of *dis*order which the human mind can conceive—battles, deluges, eruptions. And he included in his treatise on painting advice on how to develop this side of the artistic faculty also. The passages in which he does so have often been quoted, but they are so incredibly foreign to the whole Renaissance idea of art, although related to a remark in Pliny, that each time I read them, they give me a fresh surprise. I will, therefore, quote them again.

> I shall not refrain from including among these precepts a new and speculative idea, which although it may seem trivial and almost laughable, is none the less of great value in quickening

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> the spirit of invention. It is this: that you should look at certain walls stained with damp or at stones of uneven colour. If you have to invent some setting you will be able to see in these the likeness of divine landscapes, adorned with mountains, ruins, rocks, woods, great plains, hills and valleys in great variety; and then again you will see there battles and strange figures in violent action, expressions of faces and clothes and an infinity of things which you will be able to reduce to their complete and proper forms. In such walls the same thing happens as in the sound of bells, in whose strokes you may find every named word which you can imagine.

Later he repeats this suggestion in slightly different form, advising the painter to study not only marks on walls, but also "the embers of the fire, or clouds or mud, or other similar objects from which you will find most admirable ideas... because from a confusion of shapes the spirit is quickened to new inventions."

I HARDLY NEED to insist on how relevant these passages are to modern painting. Almost every morning I receive cards inviting me to current exhibitions, and on the cards are photographs of the works exhibited. Some of them consist of blots, some of scrawls, some look like clouds, some like embers of the fire, some are like mud—some of them are mud; a great many look like stains on walls, and one of them, I remember, consisted of actual stains on walls, photographed and framed. Leonardo's famous passage has been illustrated in every particular. And yet I doubt if he would have been satisfied with the results, because he believed that we must somehow unite the two opposite poles of our faculties. Art itself was the connection between the diagram and the blot.

Now in order to prevent the impression that I am taking advantage of a metaphor, as writers on art are often bound to do, I should explain how I am going to use these words. By "diagram" I mean a rational statement in a visible form, involving measurements, and usually done with an ulterior motive. The theorem of Pythagoras is proved by a diagram. Leonardo's drawings of light striking a sphere are diagrams; but the works of Mondrian, although made up of straight lines, are not diagrams, because they are not done in order to prove or measure some experience, but to please the eye. That they look like diagrams is due to influences which I will examine later. But diagrams can exist with no motive other than their own perfection, just as mathematical propositions can.

By "blots" I mean marks or areas which are not intended to convey information, but which, for some reason, seem pleasant and memorable to the maker, and can be accepted in the same sense by the spectator. I said that these blots were not intended to convey information, but of course they do, and that of two kinds. First, they tell us through association, about things we had forgotten; that was the function of Leonardo's stains on walls, which as he said, quickened the spirit of invention, and it can be the function of man-made blots as well; and secondly a man-made blot will tell us about the artist. Unless it is made entirely accidently, as by spilling an inkpot, it will be a commitment. It is quite difficult to make a non-committal blot. Although the two are connected, I think we can distinguish between analogy blots and gesture blots.

NOW LET ME TRY to apply this to modern art. Modern art is not a subject on which one can hope for a large measure of agreement, but I hope I may be allowed two assumptions. The first is that the kind of painting and architecture which we call, with varying inflections of the voice, "modern," is a true and vital expression of our own day; and the second assumption is that it differs radically from any art which has preceded it. Both these assumptions have been questioned. It has been said that modern art is "a racket" engineered by art dealers, who have exploited the incompetence of artists and the gullibility of patrons, that the whole thing is a kind of vast and very expensive practical joke. Well, fifty years is a long time to keep up a hoax of this kind, and during these years modern art has spread all over the free world and created a complete international style. I don't think that any honest-minded historian, whether he liked it or not, could pretend that modern art was the result of an accident or a conspiracy. The only doubt he could have would be whether it is, so to say, a long-term or a short-term movement. In the history of art there are stylistic changes which appear to develop from purely internal causes, and seem almost accidental in relation to the other circumstances of life and society. Such, for example, was the state of art in Italy (outside Venice) from about 1530 to 1600. When all is said about the religious disturbances of the time, the real cause of the Mannerist style was the domination of Michelangelo, who had both created an irresistible style and exhausted its possibilities. It needed the almost equally powerful pictorial imagination of Caravaggio to produce a counter-infection, which could spread from Rome to Spain and the Netherlands and prepare the way for Rembrandt. I can see nothing in the history of man's spirit to account for this episode. It seems to me to be due to an internal and specifically artistic chain of events which are easily related to one another, and comprehensible within the general framework

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of European art. On the other hand, there are events in the history of art which go far beyond the interaction of styles and which evidently reflect a change in the whole condition of the human spirit. Such an event took place towards the end of the fifth century, when the Hellenistic-Roman style gradually became what we call Byzantine; and again in the early thirteenth century, when the Gothic cathedrals shot up out of the ground. In each case the historian could produce a series of examples to prove that the change was inevitable. But actually it was nothing of the sort; it was wholly unpredictable, and was part of a complete spiritual revolution.

WHETHER WE THINK that modern art represents a transformation of style or a change of spirit depends to some extent on my second assumption, that it differs radically from anything which has preceded it. This too has been questioned; it has been said that Léger is only a logical development of Poussin, or Mondrian of Vermeer. And it is true that the element of design in each has something in common. If we pare a Poussin down to its bare bones, there are combinations of curves and cubes which are the foundations of much classical painting, and Léger had the good sense to make use of them. Similarly, in Vermeer there is a use of rectangles, large areas contrasted with very narrow ones, and a feeling for shallow recessions, which became the preferred theme of Mondrian. But such analogies are trifling compared with the differences. Poussin was a very intelligent man who thought deeply about his art, and if anyone had suggested to him that his pictures were praiseworthy solely on account of their construction, he would have been incredulous and affronted.

So let us agree that the kind of painting and architecture which we find most representative of our times—say, the painting of Jackson Pollock and the architecture of the Lever building—is deeply different from the painting and architecture of the past; and is *not* a mere whim of fashion, but the result of a great change in our ways of thinking and feeling.

How did this great change take place and what does it mean? To begin with, I think it is related to the development upon which all industrial civilisation depends, the differentiation of function. Leonardo was exceptional, almost unique in his integration of functions—the scientific and the imaginative. Yet he foreshadowed more than any other artist their disintegration, by noting and treating in isolation the diagrammatic faculty and the blot-making faculty. The average artist took the unity of these faculties for granted. They were united in Leonardo, and in lesser artists, by *interest or pleasure in the thing seen*. The external object was like a magnetic pole which drew the two faculties together. At some point the external object became a negative rather than a positive charge. Instead of drawing together the two faculties, it completely dissociated them; architecture went off in one direction with the diagram, painting went in the other direction with the blot.

THIS DISINTEGRATION WAS RELATED to a radical change in the philosophy of art. We all know that such changes, however harmless they sound when first enunciated, can have drastic consequences in the world of action. Rulers who wish to maintain the *status quo* are well advised to chop off the heads of all philosophers. What Hilaire Belloc called the "remote and ineffectual don" is more dangerous than the busy columnist with his eye on the day's news. The revolution in our ideas about the nature of painting seems to have been hatched by a don who was considered remote and ineffectual even by Oxford standards—Walter Pater. It was he (inspired, I believe, by Schopenhauer) who first propounded the idea of the æsthetic sensation, intuitively perceived.

> In its primary aspect [Pater said] a great picture has no more difficult message for us than an accidental play of sunlight and shadow for a few moments on the wall or floor; in itself, in truth, a space of such fallen light, caught, as in the colours of an Eastern carpet, but refined upon and dealt with more subtly and exquisitely than by nature itself.

It is true that his comparison with an Eastern carpet admits the possibility of "pleasant sensations" being arranged or organised; and Pater confirms this need for organisation a few lines later, when he sets down his famous dictum that "all art constantly aspires towards the condition of music." He does not believe in blots uncontrolled by the conscious mind. But he is very far from the information-giving diagram.

THIS BELIEF that art has its origin in our intuitive rather than our rational faculties, picturesquely asserted by Pater, was worked out historically and philosophically, in the somewhat wearisome volumes of Benedetto Croce, and owing to his authoritative tone, he is usually considered the originator of a new theory of aesthetics. It was, in fact, the reversion to a very old idea. Long before the Romantics had stressed the importance of intuition and self-expression, men had admitted the Dionysiac nature of art. But philosophers had always assumed that the frenzy of inspiration must be controlled by law and by the intellectual power of putting things into harmonious order.

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And this general philosophic concept of art as a combination of intuition and intellect had been supported by technical necessities. It was necessary to master certain laws and to use the intellect in order to build the Gothic cathedrals, or set up the stained glass windows of Chartres or cast the bronze doors of the Florence Baptistry. When this bracing element of craftsmanship ceased to dominate the artist's outlook, as happened soon after the time of Leonardo, new scientific disciples had to be invented to maintain the intellectual element in art. Such were perspective and anatomy. From a purely artistic point of view, they were unnecessary. The Chinese produced some of the finest landscapes ever painted, without any systematic knowledge of perspective. Greek figure sculpture reached its highest point before the study of anatomy had been systematised. But from the Renaissance onwards, painters felt that these two sciences made their art intellectually respectable. They were two ways of connecting the diagram and the blot.

IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY, belief in art as a scientific activity declined, for a quantity of reasons. Science and technology withdrew into specialisation. Voltaire's efforts to investigate the nature of heat seem to us ludicrous; Goethe's studies of botany and physics a waste of a great poet's time. In spite of their belief in inspiration, the great Romantics were aware of the impoverishment of the imagination which would take place when science had drifted out of reach, and both Shelley and Coleridge spent much time in chemical experiments. Even Turner, whose letters reveal a singular lack of analytic faculty, annotated Goethe's theories of colour, and painted two pictures to demonstrate them. No good. The laws which govern the movement of the human spirit are inexorable. The enveloping assumption, within which the artist has to function, was that science was no longer approachable by any but the specialist. And gradually there grew up the idea that all intellectual activities were hostile to art.

I have mentioned the philosophic development of this view by Croce. Let me give one example of its quiet acceptance by the official mind. The British Council sends all over the world, even to Florence and Rome, exhibitions of children's art—the point of these children's pictures being that they have no instruction of any kind, and do not attempt the troublesome task of painting what they see, Well, why not, after all? The results are quite agreeable—sometimes strangely beautiful; and the therapeutic effect on the children is said to be excellent. It is like one of those small harmless heresies which we are shocked to find were the object of persecution by the Mediaeval Church. When, however, we hear admired modern painters saying that they draw their inspiration from the drawings of children and lunatics, as well as from stains on walls, we recognise that we have accomplices in a revolution.

THE LAWLESS and intuitive character of modern art is a familiar theme and certain historians have said that it is symptomatic of a decline in Western civilisation. This is journalism—one of those statements that sound well to-day and nonsense to-morrow. It is obvious that the development of physical science in the last hundred years has been one of the most colossal efforts the human intellect has ever made. But I think it is also true that human beings can produce, in a given epoch, only a certain amount of creative energy, and that this is directed to different ends and different times —music in the eighteenth century is the obvious example; and I believe that the dazzling achievements of science during the last seventy years have deflected far more of those skills and endowments which go to the making of a work of art than is usually realised. To begin with, there is the sheer energy. In every moulding of a Renaissance palace we are conscious of an immense intellectual energy, and it is the absence of this energy in the nineteenth-century copies of Renaissance buildings which makes them seem so dead. To find a form with the same vitality as a window moulding of the Palazzo Farnese I must wait till I get back into an aeroplane, and look at the relation of the engine to the wing. That form is alive, not (as used to be said) because it is functional—many functional shapes are entirely uninteresting—but because it is animated by the breath of modern science.

The deflections from art to science are the more serious because these are not, as used to be supposed, two contrary activities, but in fact draw on many of the same capacities of the human mind. In the last resort each depends on the imagination. Artist and scientist alike are both trying to give concrete form to dimly apprehended ideas. Dr. Bronowski has put it very well: "All science is the search for unity in hidden likenesses, and the starting point is an image, because then the unity is before our mind's eye." Even if we no longer have to pretend that a group of stars looks like a plough or a bear, our scientists still depend on humanly comprehensible images, and it is striking that the valid symbols of our time, invented to embody some scientific truth, have taken root in the popular imagination. Do those red and blue balls connected by rods really resemble a type of atomic structure? I am too ignorant

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to say. I accept the symbol just as an early Christian accepted the Fish or the Lamb, and I find it echoed or even (it would seem) anticipated in the work of modern artists like Kandinsky and Miró.

FINALLY, THERE IS THE QUESTION of popular interest and approval. We have grown accustomed to the idea that great artists can work in solitude and incomprehension; but that was not the way things happened in the Renaissance or the seventeenth century, still less in ancient Greece. The pictures carried through the streets by cheering crowds, the *Te Deum* sung on completion of a public building—all this indicates a state of opinion in which men could undertake great works of art with a confidence quite impossible to-day. The research scientist, on the other hand, not only has millions of pounds worth of plant and equipment for the asking, he has principalities and powers waiting for his conclusions. He goes to work, as Titian once did, confident that he will succeed because the strong tide of popular admiration is flowing with him.

BUT ALTHOUGH science has absorbed so many of the functions of art and deflected (I believe) so many potential artists, it obviously cannot be a *substitute* for art. Its mental processes may be similar, but its ends are different. There have been three views about the purpose of art. First that it aims simply at imitation; secondly that it should influence human conduct; and thirdly that it should produce a kind of exalted happiness. The first view, which was developed in ancient Greece, must be reckoned one of the outstanding failures of Greek thought. It is simply contrary to experience, because if the visual arts aimed solely at imitating things they would be of very little importance; whereas the Greeks above all people knew that they were important, and treated them as such. Yet such was the prestige of Greek thought that this theory of art was revived in the Renaissance, in an uncomfortable sort of way, and had a remarkable recrudescence in the nineteenth century. The second view, that art should influence conduct and opinions, is more respectable, and held the field throughout the Middle Ages; indeed the more we learn about the art of the past and motives of those who commissioned it, the more important this particular aim appears to be; it still dominated art theory in the time of Diderot. The third view, that art should produce a kind of exalted happiness, was invented by the Romantics at the beginning of the nineteenth century (well, perhaps *invented* by Plotinus, but given currency by the Romantics), and gradually gained ground until by the end of the century it was believed in by almost all educated people. It has held the field in Western Europe till the present day. Leaving aside the question which of these theories is correct, let me ask which of them is most likely to be a helpful background to art (for that is all that a theory of æsthetics can be) in an age when science has such an overwhelming domination over the human mind. The first aim must be reckoned *by itself* to be pointless, since science has now discovered so many ways of imitating appearances, which are incomparably more accurate and convincing than even the most realistic picture. Painting might defend itself against the daguerreotype, but not against Cinerama.

The popular application of science has also, it seems to me, invalidated the second aim of art, because it is quite obvious that no picture can influence human conduct as effectively as a television advertisement. It is quite true that in totalitarian countries artists are still instructed to influence conduct. But that is either due to technical deficiencies, as in China, where in default of T.V., broadsheets and posters are an important way of communicating with an illiterate population; or, in Russia, to a philosophic time-lag. The fact is that very few countries have had the courage to take Plato's advice and exclude works of art altogether. They have, therefore, had to invent some excuse for keeping them on, and the Russians are still using the pretext that paintings and sculpture can influence people in favour of socialist and national policies, although it must have dawned on them that these results can be obtained far more effectively by the cinema and television.

So it seems to me that of these three possible purposes of art—imitation, persuasion, or exalted pleasure—only the third still holds good in an age of science; and it must be justified very largely by the fact that it is a feeling which is absent from scientific achievements—although mathematicians have told us that it is similar to the feeling aroused by their finest calculations. We might say that in the modern world the art of painting is defensible only in so far as it is complementary to science.

WE ARE PROPELLED in the same direction by another achievement of modern science, the study of psychology. That peeling away of the psyche, which was formerly confined to spiritual instructors, or the great novelists, has become a commonplace of conversation. When a good, solid, external word like Duty is turned into a vague, uneasy, internal word like Guilt, one cannot expect artists to take much interest in good, solid, external objects. The artist has always been involved in

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the painful process of turning himself inside out, but in the past his inner convictions have been of such a kind that they can, so to say, re-form themselves round an object. But, as we have seen, even in Leonardo's time, there were certain obscure needs and patterns of the spirit, which could discover themselves only through less precise analogies—the analogies provided by stains on walls or the embers of a fire. Now, I think that in this inward-looking age, when we have become so much more aware of the vagaries of the spirit, and so respectful of the working of the unconscious, the artist is more likely to find his point of departure in analogies of this kind. They are more exciting because they, so to say, take us by surprise, like forgotten smells; and they seem to be more profound because the memories they awaken have been deeply buried in our minds. Whether Jung is right in believing that this free, undirected, illogical form of mental activity will allow us to pick up, like a magic radio station, some deep memories of our race which can be of universal interest, I do not know. The satisfaction we derive from certain combinations of shape and colour does seem to be inexplicable even by the remotest analogies, and may perhaps involve inherited memories. It is not yet time for the art-historian to venture in to that mysterious jungle. I must, however, observe that our respect for the unconscious mind not only gives us an interest in analogy blots, but in what I called "gesture blots" as well. We recognise how free and forceful such a communication can be, and this aspect of art has become more important in the last ten years. An apologist of modern art has said: "What we want to know is not what the world looks like, but what we mean to each other." So the gesture blot becomes a sort of ideogram, like primitive Chinese writing. Students of Zen assure us it is a means of communication more direct and complete than anything which our analytic system can achieve. Almost 2,000 years before Leonardo looked for images in blots, Lao-tzu had written:

> *The Tao is something blurred and indistinct.*
> *How indistinct! How blurred!*
> *Yet within are images,*
> *How blurred! How indistinct!*
> *Yet within are things.*

I SAID THAT WHEN THE SPLIT took place between our faculties of measurement and intuition, *architecture* went off with the diagram. Of course architecture had always been involved with measurement and calculation, but we tend to forget how greatly it was also involved with the imitation of external objects. "The question to be determined," said Ruskin, "is whether architecture is a frame for the sculpture, or the sculpture an ornament of the architecture." And he came down on the first alternative. He thought that a building became architecture only in so far as it was a frame for figurative sculpture. I wonder if there is a single person alive who would agree with him. And yet Ruskin had the most sensitive eye and the keenest analytic faculty that has ever been applied to architecture. Many people disagreed with him in his own day; they thought that sculpture should be subordinate to the total design of the building. But that anything claiming to be architecture could dispense with ornament altogether never entered anyone's head till a relatively short time ago.

A purely diagrammatic architecture is only about thirty years older than a purely blottesque painting; yet it has changed the face of the world and produced in every big city a growing uniformity. Perhaps because it is a little older, perhaps because it seems to have a material justification, we have come to accept it without question. People who are still puzzled or affronted by action painting are proud of the great steel and glass boxes which have arisen so miraculously in the last ten years. And yet these two are manifestations of the same state of mind. The same difficulties of function, the same deflection from the external object, and the same triumph of science. Abstract painting and glass box architecture are related in two different ways. There is the direct relationship of style—the kind of relationship which painting and architecture had with one another in the great consistent ages of art like the 13th and 17th centuries. For modern architecture is not simply functional; at its best it has a style which is almost as definite and as arbitrary as Gothic. And this leads me back to my earlier point: that diagrams can be drawn in order to achieve some imagined perfection, similar to that of certain mathematical propositions. Thirty years after Pater's famous dictum, painters in Russia, Holland, and France began to put into practice the theory that "all art constantly aspires to the condition of music"; and curiously enough this Pythagorean mystique of measurement produced a style—the style which reached its purest expression in the Dutch painter, Mondrian. And through the influence of the *Bauhaus*, this became the leading style of modern architecture.

The other relationship between contemporary architecture and painting appears to be indirect and even accidental. I am thinking of the visual impact when the whole upper part of a tall glass building mirrors the clouds or the dying embers of a sunset, and so becomes a frame for a marvellous, moving Tachiste picture. I do not think that future historians of art will find this

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accidental at all, but will see it as the culmination of a long process beginning in the Romantic period, in which, from Wordsworth and De Quincey onwards, poets and philosophers recognised the movement of clouds as the symbol of a newly discovered mental faculty.

SUCH, THEN, would be my diagnosis of the present condition of art. I must now, by special request, say what I think will happen to art in the future. I think that the state of affairs which I have called the blot and the diagram will last for a long time. Architecture will continue to be made up of glass boxes and steel grids, without ornament of any kind. Painting will continue to be subjective and arcane, an art of accident rather than rule, of stains on walls rather than of calculation, of inscape rather than of external reality.

This conclusion is rejected by those who believe in a social theory of art. They maintain that a living art must depend on the popular will, and that neither the blot nor the diagram is popular; and, since those who hold a social theory of art are usually Marxists, they point to Soviet Russia as a country where all my conditions obtain—differentiation of function, the domination of science and so forth—and yet what we call modern art has gained no hold. This argument does not impress me. There is, of course, nothing at all in the idea that Communist doctrines inevitably produce social realism. Painting in Yugoslavia, in Poland and Hungary is in the same modern idiom as painting in the United States, and shows remarkable vitality. Whereas the official social realism of the U.S.S.R., except for a few illustrators, lacks life or conviction, and shows no evidence of representing the popular will. In fact Russian architecture has already dropped the grandiose official style, and I am told that this is now taking place in painting also. In spite of disapproval amounting to persecution, experimental painters exist and find buyers.

I doubt if the Marxists are even correct in saying that the blot and the diagram are not popular. The power, size, and splendour of, say, the Seagram building in New York makes it as much the object of pride and wonder as great architecture was in the past. And one of the remarkable things about Tachisme is the speed with which it has spread throughout the world, not only in sophisticated centres, but in small local art societies. It has become as much an international style as Gothic in the 14th and Baroque in the 17th centuries. I recently visited the exhibition of a provincial academy in the north of England, a very respectable body then celebrating its hundred and fiftieth anniversary. A few years ago it had been full of Welsh mountain landscapes, and scenes of streets and harbours, carefully delineated. Now practically every picture was in the Tachiste style, and I found that many of them were painted by the same artists, often quite elderly people, who had previously painted the mountains and streets. As works of art, they seemed to me neither better nor worse. But I could not help thinking that they must have been less trouble to do, and I reflected that the painters must have had a happy time releasing the Dionysiac elements in their natures. However, we must not be too cynical about this. I do not believe that the spread of action painting is due solely to the fact that it is easy to do. Cubism, especially synthetic Cubism, also looks easy to do, and never had this immense diffusion. It remained the style of a small élite of professional painters and specialised art lovers; whereas Tachisme has spread to fabrics, to the decoration of public buildings, to the backgrounds of television programmes, to advertising of all kinds. Indeed the closest analogy to action painting is the most popular art of all—the art of jazz. The trumpeter who rises from his seat as one possessed, and squirts out his melody like a scarlet scrawl against a background of plangent dashes and dots, is not as a rule performing for a small body of intellectuals.

NEVERTHELESS, I DO NOT THINK that the style of the blot and the diagram will last forever. For one thing, I believe that the imitation of external reality is a fundamental human instinct which is bound to reassert itself. In his admirable book on sculpture called *Aratra Pentelici*, Ruskin describes an experience which many of us could confirm. "Having been always desirous," he says,

> "that the education of women should begin in learning how to cook, I got leave, one day, for a little girl of eleven years old to exchange, much to her satisfaction, her schoolroom for the kitchen. But as ill fortune would have it, there was some pastry toward, and she was left unadvisedly in command of some delicately rolled paste; whereof she made no pies, but an unlimited quantity of cats and mice....
>
> "Now [he continues] you may read the works of the gravest critics of art from end to end; but you will find, at last, they can give you no other true account of the spirit of sculpture than that it is an irresistible human instinct for the making of cats and mice, and other imitable living creatures, in such permanent form that one may play with the images at leisure."

I cannot help feeling that he was right. I am fond of works of art, and I collect them. But I do not want to hang them on the wall simply in order to get an electric shock every time that I pass them. I want to hold them, and turn

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them round and re-hang them—in short, to play with the images at leisure. And, putting aside what may be no more than a personal prejudice, I rather doubt if an art which depends solely on the first impact on our emotions is permanently valid. When the shock is exhausted, we have nothing to occupy our minds. And this is particularly troublesome with an art which depends so much on the unconscious, because, as we know from the analysis of dreams, the furniture of our unconscious minds is even more limited, repetitive, and commonplace than that of our conscious minds. The blots and stains of modern painting depend ultimately on the memories of things seen, memories sunk deep in the unconscious, overlaid, transformed, assimilated to a physical condition, but memories none the less. *Ex nihilo nihil fit.* It is not possible for a painter to lose all contact with the visible world.

AT THIS POINT the apes have provided valuable evidence. There is no doubt that they are Tachiste painters of considerable accomplishment. I do not myself care for the work of Congo the chimp, but Sophie, the Rotterdam gorilla, is a charming artist, whose delicate traceries remind me of early Paul Klee. As you know, apes take their painting seriously. The patterns they produce are not the result of mere accident, but of intense, if short-lived, concentration, and a lively sense of balance and space-filling. If you compare the painting of a young ape with that of a human child of relatively the same age, you will find that in the first, expressive, pattern-making stage, the ape is superior. Then, automatically and inexorably the child begins to draw *things*—man, house, truck, etc. This the ape never does. Of course his Tachiste paintings are far more attractive than the child's crude conceptual outlines. But they cannot develop. They are monotonous and ultimately rather depressing.

The difference between the child and the ape does not show itself in æsthetic perception, or in physical perception of any kind, but in the child's power to form a concept. Later, as we know, he will spend his time trying to adapt his concept to the evidence of physical sensation; in that struggle lies the whole of style. But the concept—the need to draw a line round his thought—comes first. Now it is a truism that the power to form concepts is what distinguishes man from the animals; although the prophets of modern society, Freud, Jung, D. H. Lawrence, have rightly insisted on the importance of animal perceptions in balanced human personality, the concept-forming faculty has not declined in modern man. On the contrary, it is the basis of that vast scientific achievement which, as I said earlier, seems almost to have put art out of business.

Now if the desire to represent external reality depended solely on an interest in visual sensation, I would agree that it might disappear from art and never return. But if, as the evidence of children and monkeys indicates, it depends primarily on the formation of concepts, which are then modified by visual sensation, I think it is bound to return. For I consider the human faculty of forming concepts at least as "inalienable" as "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. . . ."

I AM NOT, of course, suggesting that the imitation of external reality will ever again become what it was in European art from the mid-17th to the late 19th centuries. Such a subordination of the concept to the visual sensation was altogether exceptional in the history of art. Much of the territory won by modern painting will, I believe, be held. For example, freedom of association, the immediate passage from one association to another—which is so much a part of Picasso's painting and Henry Moore's sculpture, is something which has existed in music since Wagner and in poetry since Rimbaud and Mallarmé. (I mean existed consciously; of course it underlies all great poetry and music.) It need not be sacrificed in a return to external reality. Nor need the direct communication of intuition, through touch and an instinctive sense of materials. This I consider pure gain. In the words of my original metaphor, both the association blot and the gesture blot can remain. But they must be given more nourishment: they must be related to a fuller knowledge of the forms and structures which impress us most powerfully, and so become part of our concept of natural order. At the end of the passage in which Leonardo tells the painter that he can look for battles, landscapes, and animals in the stains on walls, he adds this caution, "But first be sure that you know all the members of all things you wish to depict, both the members of the animals and the members of landscapes, that is to say of rocks, plants, and so forth." It is because one feels in Henry Moore's sculpture this knowledge of the members of animals and plants, that his work, even at its most abstract, makes an impression on us different from that of his imitators. His figures are not merely pleasing examples of design, but seem to be a part of nature, "rolled round in Earth's diurnal course with rocks and stones and trees."

THOSE LINES of Wordsworth lead me to the last reason why I feel that the intuitive blot and scribble may not dominate painting forever. Our belief in the whole purpose of art

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may change. I said earlier that we now believe it should aim at producing a kind of exalted happiness: this really means that art becomes an end in itself. Now it is an incontrovertible fact of history that the greatest art has always been *about* something, a means of communicating some truth which is assumed to be more important than the art itself. The truths which art has been able to communicate have been of a kind which could not be put in any other way. They have been ultimate truths, stated symbolically. Science has achieved its triumph precisely by disregarding such truths, by not asking unanswerable questions, but sticking to the question "how." I confess it looks to me as if we shall have to wait a long time before there is some new belief which requires expression through art rather than through statistics or equations. And until this happens, the visual arts will fall short of the greatest epochs, the ages of the Parthenon, the Sistine Ceiling, and Chartres Cathedral.

I am afraid there is nothing we can do about it. No amount of goodwill and no expenditure of money can affect that sort of change. We cannot even dimly foresee when it will happen or what form it will take. We can only be thankful for what we have got—a vigorous, popular, decorative art, complementary to our architecture and our science, somewhat monotonous, somewhat prone to charlatanism, but genuinely expressive of our time.

Poetry

Thoughts in a tin can, kicked along a dark alley,
Frantic scribblings on odd bits of paper
Written in the sweat of frustration
Forced through the plastic tube of a ballpoint pen
Or dripping lazily off a quill.
Listening to a Jamaican 'bus conductor
Trying to explain that fares have gone up again.
The perpetual motion of the industrial city
Or the seeming laziness of a village cricket match.
A street of tenement houses
With a fat woman leaning from a third floor window,
Hair in curlers beneath a grubby scarf,
Shouting at her urchin offspring
To come in for supper
Before she sends their father down to them.
The graceful undulations of a fashion model
As she parades like a Christmas-tree fairy
Pirouetting like a peacock ballerina
In all her finery.
A fumbling in the dark corridor of life,
A hand groping for the light switch,
A mind grasping for an explanation.
Poetry is the condensation of a boiling world.

Rod Stuart

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THEATRE

No View from the Toolshed

By Nigel Dennis

THE FIRST THING we are happy to say about *Happy Days* is that Mr. Beckett has consented at last to allow woman her fair share of human futility. There *was*, admittedly, a woman in *End Game*, but she was pretty silent in her trash-can and did little more than suggest the thoughtless folly of motherhood. In consequence, we had long since taken for granted that in Mr. Beckett's view life's intolerable tedium and pointlessness were noticed only by men, and that they alone suffered the grief of being alive and the chagrin of being unable to die. This had seemed unjust to us, because nowadays there is nothing to prevent a normal woman from stepping out into the world and falling on her face down those long stone stairs.

Happy Days has corrected this imbalance. Its spokesman is a spokeswoman—and what a healthy difference this makes! Mr. Beckett's men, much as we admired them, were in danger of becoming used up: one or two more plays and they might have started repeating themselves. But once relegated to the background and left to follow their filthy habits unseen, while woman totters into the foreground, what a large new dimension is added to human emptiness! For there is surely no longer the slightest doubt but that women suffer in a special way. Women are *not* men. It is unkind and illegal to assume that they are. If women were men, marriage would not be the same problem at all. Marriage is a life-long union between two opposing sorts of pain. The husband that fails to understand this can only exacerbate the opposition.

As soon as the curtain rises on *Happy Days* we see that this very injustice is being performed. The husband has long since abandoned all responsibility for his wife's pain—or happiness, or whatever you care to call it—and has retreated into a quiet tunnel: we are not actually shown this tunnel, because Mr. Beckett knows that he can count on all of us, men and women, to *imagine* a husband in a tunnel. The husband leaves his tunnel only in order to bury himself behind the newspaper—another gesture that any husband or wife in the audience can recognise easily. We would hazard that the husband's main reason for living either in a tunnel or behind a newspaper is the practical, everyday one of not wanting to listen to his wife's voice: any psychologist that cares to come forward with a more profound explanation must be dismissed as a bachelor, or as a man too blinded by the complexities of his bigotry to appreciate the simple but strong relationship between the ties of marriage and the freedom of the Press.

The husband's abnegation leaves the stage free for his wife, whose difficulties are not his difficulties. Where he wishes to be deaf, she wishes him to hear. But she is no perfectionist, this sensible wife. If he hears only an occasional word, she is pleased; if he grants her a grunt in reply, she is enraptured. What a mercy for the unfortunate man that his wife is buried up to the waist in scorched earth! She cannot take steps to *make* him hear, which she would certainly do if Mr. Beckett had not had the wisdom to bury her. Wisdom? Well, not wisdom, perhaps. Just a small prejudice in favour of his own sex. An appreciation of how much deafness matters to a married man. The lengths to which he will go to ensure it.

WE MUST NOW ASK the following question: in what state of mind should we look at a stage that is empty save for a half-buried wife and the back of a husband's bald head? Well, everyone is bound to differ somewhat on this matter. We know many people who would feel depressed—*only* depressed—when confronted suddenly by such a human spectacle. We know others who would settle back sternly in their seats and prepare themselves for a most useful lecture on the human situation. And both these attitudes seem almost inexplicable. For is it possible, *really*, to half-bury a *diseuse* and en-tunnel her hubby and still demand that the spectacle inspire the sadness of a train-accident in the Simplon Tunnel, or the gravity of a sociological conference? Surely the situation before us is entirely ludicrous and demands an entirely humorous response?

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To argue these points is to get very close to Mr. Beckett's particular kind of power. He has the magic of impressing people to whom he does not seem funny. These people realise that he is not a satirist—that he has no quarrel with any persons or institutions, that he holds nothing and nobody up to ridicule. They know that he is a considerable preacher—a sort of unfrocked parson who no longer believes in a Christian salvation, but only feels that much worse in consequence. They know he is a pessimist and that all his plays, no matter in what terms he couches them, are emphatic in regard to the sadness and regrettableness of human affairs. They feel these things so strongly that even if Mr. Beckett sent up his curtain on two copulating cats, they would only sigh sadly: "How true! Oh, the grief of it!"

Certainly, this shows a remarkable sort of power in a dramatist—is there any *other* dramatist who could present the ludicrous so frankly and get back such a heart-rending groan? Moreover, it *is* in large part the true nature of Mr. Beckett's power: he does in truth sorrow with the humourless and mourn with the sad. It is the humorist who suffers most at Mr. Beckett's hands, because the humorist is always seeing in a Beckett play whole jokes that are only really half-jokes, and funny situations that may have been intended otherwise. The humorist, indeed, tries to strike a bargain with Mr. Beckett, saying: "Sad underneath, by all means. But funny in expression, no?" But the bargain is refused. Mr. Beckett denies the working agreement that Chekhov accepted. Laughter, he seems to say, is the most obvious sort of misery.

MR. BECKETT'S intransigence has grieved us very much. We have danced before him nearly nude, shaking bells in his ear and calling him "Uncle." We have urged him to embrace a madcap image, and we have pointed out with matchless gravity that objects such as bald heads, old boots, newspapers, and artificial dogs with leaking penises were brought into the world purely for fun and can never find inclusion in any solemn category. He has merely dropped a tear, and passed on—one of those people, probably, who think that wise advice is one of the few *really funny* elements in the catastrophe of life.

This has put us in a most embarrassing position. We spend most of our time pouring measures of bile over directors and actors who pervert authors' meanings to their own uses and think that the theatre is just a place where one obtains the maximum of self-expression with the minimum of honesty. And now, here we are, ourselves a member of this low, degraded, filthy tribe, longing to see Mr. Beckett played without regard for Mr. Beckett. For we have read and studied the text of *Happy Days*. We have spent a *happy day* doing so. We began to smile at the very first line and went on smiling to the bitter end. Then, still smiling, we went to the Royal Court and saw it acted. Our smile fled like a chalk mark, leaving only a blackboard behind.

How can such a thing be possible? Is the human mind, or voice, such that *any* line and *any* words can be spoken in an infinite variety of ways, so that the most ridiculous remark can sound tragic and the most tragic cry ridiculous? We know, in fact, that this *is* so, but is there not a limit somewhere?

Happy Days is the tightest and best-managed of Mr. Beckett's plays. It has double-meanings and perplexing points, but it moves in a straight line. Two extra and undesirable characters *threaten* to spoil it by appearing in person, as they did in *Godot*; but by admitting them only to the wife's memory, Mr. Beckett adds magically to their significance while magnifying his heroine's solitariness. She must make the present tolerable by bringing her past to bear on it—by remembering to clean her teeth and say her prayers like a good girl; by extracting moral lessons of self-help from dreamy recollections. She must do this on the stage for nearly one and a half hours, with nothing in the way of material assistance but the contents of her hand-bag, and nothing in the way of human support but an occasional remark from her sunken husband.

To make this huge task possible, Mr. Beckett has given his actress two strong instruments. First, he has made her lines very ladylike and old-fashioned, so that the memories which the lady digs up from her Edwardian past can be recounted with *style*. Second, he has taken good care that this unfortunate creature, bereft of all mobility, shall have a means of *holding* her audience. This means is pure-and-simple comedy.

"Another heavenly day" are the rapturous words with which the play begins. Given the circumstances before our eyes, could any words be better chosen to start an audience laughing? And as we pass on through the text, we find that once the lady has started the laughter at the very beginning, there is no excuse for its failing to continue. No woman, cut off in her prime, can recall a few stumbling lines of verse and then remark with *no* intent to amuse: "A part remains of one's classics to help one through the day." No woman can recall *gravely* that her first kiss took place "Within a toolshed, though whose I cannot conceive. We had no toolshed and he most certainly had no toolshed. . . ." If she *can* say this gravely, what, then, is bawdy *for*? Or is Mr. Beckett regarded with such horrible awe that even his vulgar innuendoes (and

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Happy Days is rich in them) must on no account be shared with the audience?

If the play is not expressed humorously, can it be expressed in any other way? Well, there is a faint possibility that an actress with extraordinary vocal qualities might persuade her audience to regard her misery with tears. But in whatever manner we regard the text, we must have those vocal qualities. It is impossible to read the play without seeing that it calls for an infinite variety of vocal modulations—that it is a play of speech punctuated by pauses.

MR. BECKETT describes his heroine as "About fifty, well-preserved, blonde for preference, plump, arms and shoulders bare, low bodice, big bosom. . . ." Miss Brenda Bruce fits this description perfectly. Her bare arms and shoulders are the very pink of perfection. No bottled fruit could challenge the excellence of her preservation. Her bosom is such that were we to be weighed in the balance with it, we should be found wanting. But beneath this glorious rebuff to pessimism, what? A voice without a trace of sonorousness and as flat, hard, and inflexible as a steel girder. An entirely neutral personality. A face from which all trace of character and command seem to have been erased deliberately, as if vitality was an impropriety. As a philosopher, expounding to students the dry conclusions of Mr. Beckett's thoughts, Miss Bruce was conclusively dry. The awful mistake was to suppose that this was her duty—that she was concerned not with the lines which the author had written but with the view of life he was reputed to have. Integrity and fidelity could hardly have gone farther in the wrong direction: here was a rare case where even burlesquing and over-playing would have succeeded much better than misplaced honesty.

This is a great pity because Mr. Beckett has written a part which must be regarded as a very great part indeed—a part so extraordinarily difficult that the actress who could command it would be the wonder of her profession. For, think, among other things, of the magnificent sacrifices she would have to make. Rooted to one spot, she would have neither entries nor exits with which to draw attention away from the play and fix it upon her well-known hip-action. All those unnecessary and circuitous glides from one part of the stage to another would be ruled out; no long rehearsal hours could be wasted on the chalking of lines and the measuring of frontage. In a desert of scorched earth, all the theatre's most-prized professional nonsense would be impossible—none could hurry forward to apply flame to Abdullah by courtesy of Ronson, and the interminable pourings of whiskies would cease. Bereft of all stage traffic, the actress would be left with nothing but her part; deprived of all action, she would be forced to think and even to act. In fact, were it not obvious that Mr. Beckett is a benevolent man, we should not hesitate to applaud him as a cruel and pitiless instrument of reformation.

It may, of course, be impossible to find an actress who is prepared to sacrifice all the superfluous things on which her reputation depends. In that case, there will be nothing to do but clap a wig and falsies on one of our talented homosexual actors. We can think of two or three who could not only catch the tone of *Happy Days* to perfection but might not be averse to exploiting the gaiety of buried womanhood. If the outcome was a little hilarious, no objection would be heard from us. For we would much rather see Mr. Beckett dancing to jig-time than being bled piously to death at his own altar. There *is* a shrine at Canterbury, but it is not his.

N.B.

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FILM

Priests of the Highbrow Cinema

On Image and Word — By NICOLA CHIAROMONTE

A FOOTPRINT on the sand is the *sign* of a man's passage. The cross is the *symbol* of Christianity. Tears are signs of emotion; words are symbols of thoughts.

A word is a sign only when it is used in a strictly utilitarian way—to indicate or command. In other cases words, even though they have a precise meaning, change with their context. Only in zoology does "horse" signify *equus caballus*. In general discourse it can mean the beast that draws the peasant's cart; the fantastic quadrupeds yoked to Phaeton's chariot; the animals on which Murat's squadrons rode forth; the heroic creature of equestrian monuments; or all these things. The meaning of a word lies not only in its dictionary definitions, but in the host of associations that they evoke. It is not just context that defines and enhances the significance of a word, but syntax and order as well. In the most primitive communication among people words are merely indicative or instrumental. It is in poetry, however, that the symbolic value of words reaches its apex.

Between a sign and the thing it signifies there is the fixed, determined relationship of cause and effect. We see this in the case of the footprint on the sand, the tear on the eyelash, or the trademark of a commercial product. But no matter how closely tied a symbol is to the thing symbolised, the relation is variable, flexible, and free. The cross has become the symbol of Christianity not because of its form, but because the Christians, following St. Paul, at a definite moment in their history decided to adopt the instrument of Christ's torture as their emblem. Similarly, the relation between a word and its meaning depends on its origin, its history, and its usage. Naturally, for a non-Christian or an indifferent Christian, the cross is merely a sign, but for a true believer it evokes the fundamental tenet of his faith: the sacrifice of God-Man. Of course, a word can also be used as a label or as a signal of command. But not by lovers and poets and those who wish truly to commune with others.

A WORD, THEN, CAN be a symbol. A photograph, however, can only be a sign, an unequivocal sign of the passage of a material object before the camera-eye. Similarly, the traces left on a movie film by a motion or a series of motions are also signs. But if a coherent discourse can be considered the "trace" of anything at all, it is the trace of meanings that a human mind in its experience of reality has apprehended and wants to communicate.

To identify a word without penetrating its meaning is utterly useless, and in order to penetrate its meaning, we have to repeat in some way the experience of its discovery. Ortega y Gasset justly observed that understanding a discourse involves our comprehending not only what is expressed in it, but also what is left unexpressed, and what cannot be expressed. Ineffability is an intrinsic condition of language. But the photographic image is an absolutely explicit indicator; and this is both its strength and its weakness. It can show everything that is showable—and nothing else. The emotions it arouses are psychological "effects," in the strictest, most deterministic sense of the word. But an emotion that a word arouses cannot be considered the *effect* of that word. For the emotion immediately provoked by a word does not exhaust its meaning. The mind actively intervenes—clarifying, enriching, interpreting, and perhaps discarding the original reaction in order to comprehend the true significance of what has been uttered.

NO TRICK of montage, no photographic inventiveness—nothing can change the essential and necessary fact that the cinematographic image is an imprint. Nothing can promote it from the status of a sign to that of a symbol. It cannot become a kind of word; it cannot signify more than itself. Nothing can turn a sequence of cinematic images into a sort of discourse. It can never be more than a group of pictures that have been juxtaposed for the purpose of imitating a real event; and the only

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effect it can have on the spectator is the evocation of emotions *similar* to those that could have been aroused by the real event. There is no device or technique by which a series of cinematic images can pass from the sphere of the imitative and the external to the intrinsically different sphere of coherent discourse, through which we endeavour to achieve logical order, acknowledging the mind's imperative to discover the rational in every experience.

If by reason we mean significant order, clear and coherent expression, then the universe of words (and certainly the universe of art) is governed by reason. Or, to put it differently, it is ruled by a necessity other than that of the physical or material world. But the realm of images is controlled by chance, by the way events and things happen in reality; and while series of images can cleverly imitate, reconstruct, and accentuate reality, they do not require us to ask why things happen the way they do. Reason has no role in a sequence of images; its place has been taken by actuality, which needs no reasons. The realm of discourse, however, is entirely occupied by thoughts and questions. Since one word cannot follow another without a reason, we cannot avoid asking ourselves why this is said or that is thought, and what motivates the mind to say this and think that. In the sphere of language we cannot limit ourselves to the machine-like registration of events, because the mind cannot function without ordering and evaluating. But images can only be registered; otherwise, we strip them of their essential virtue—indisputable evidence.

In one of Alberto Moravia's film reviews, which abound in acute observations, he argues along the same line:

> The suggestiveness of a word is much less immediate and overwhelming than that of the cinematographic image; yet it is deeper and more persistent. Cinematographic images can be compared to mirages that are seen so frequently in the desert. When the thirsty explorer descries a well surrounded by palm trees in the distance, he rushes towards it without stopping to think. But as soon as he discovers that instead of a spring there is nothing but the same stretch of burning sand, he realises that the image has left no mark on his spirit. For, after all, it was an illusion of the senses, not of the feelings. The word, on the contrary, works on the mind and consequently on the emotions; it "persuades."
>
> In other words, the cinematographic image acts on the senses somewhat as alcohol, drugs, and other chemical compounds do. And perhaps that is why the laws dealing with the use of these intoxicants have always been so severe; just as those concerning the movies have been. But, after all, images leave things as they found them just as intoxicants do (if we except, of course, the damage they have done to the body). All that can happen to us after looking at images is that we rub our eyes and say, "I have been dreaming." How different is the effect of words. From them there can never be an awakening. Only another word can dissipate the effect of a word.

One could not express more succinctly and with greater acumen what there is to be said about image, word and the cinema as an art. But when Moravia discusses a particular film in detail, there is nothing in his language to indicate that he is speaking about images and not words, movies and not books. Still, if the cinematographic image is an illusion and a fleeting mirage, while words "persuade," penetrate the mind, and have effects "from which there is never an awakening," it would seem that a critic should take this fundamental difference into account. How, then, can Moravia, a novelist, speak of a film as if it were some kind of novel, loading it with an intellectual content that he, himself, says only words can have?

For example, he tries to use the Marxist notion of alienation as the basis of his judgments of Resnais' and Robbe-Grillet's *Last Year at Marienbad* and Antonioni's *The Eclipse*. According to Moravia, the two French directors look at reality as if they were men from Mars, and "refuse to give meaning to the lack of meaning peculiar to an alienated world.... They declare themselves satisfied with things as they stand." Hence, their movie "is a film consisting of nothing but images, that is, of insignificant images emptied of everything that lies under their surface, of everything but their beauty... on these images a love-story is superimposed." Whereas, in the Italian film:

> the camera's eye... is the eye of a European intellectual of bourgeois origin... not a Martian. This intellectual is not a Marxist, but a humanistic moralist, psychologist, and sociologist. He refuses to accept the situation of alienation, which to him is profoundly abnormal and hence a source of suffering. He shows that the alienating element is money (symbolised by the Stock Exchange) which worms its way into all relationships, including the sexual one.... And in the sequence of the eclipse which closes the film, the religious-humanistic moralism of our intellectual is emphasised. Here we even see an allusion, perhaps an unconscious one, to the Biblical image of the sun that became "black as sackcloth of hair."

Moravia concludes by saying that in the French film "alienation is accepted, and, in a certain sense, ignored; therefore all ends well. Whereas in *The Eclipse* it is denounced; so all ends badly. Thus Resnais is an alienated being, or tries to be; while Antonioni is a moralist and treats alienation realistically."

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LET ME SAY at once that I regard *Last Year at Marienbad* and *The Eclipse* as perfect representatives of a type of false and tedious film which presumes to use images as if they were words full of profound meaning. Now, of course, everybody is free to read as many meanings as he wishes into a series of photographs; or to enjoy as many meanings as they evoke in his mind. In a certain sense the function of the image has always been to spur the mind to reverie.

But the main question raised by Moravia's comments is a different one. The question is where, in what images or sequence of images not only Moravia, but we, too, can find the concept of alienation clearly present in Antonioni's film and clearly absent from Resnais'. As for me, all I saw in *Last Year at Marienbad* was a series of images that were sometimes precious and always unbearably "significant." But, I am sure that if I had wanted to, I could have discovered the concept of alienation, too. In fact, all one needs is some familiarity with the premises of the *école du régard* and with the novels of Robbe-Grillet, for example, to understand that by means of the systematic destruction of the synchronisation of word and image, the director's aim is to give the illusion of an immediate experience in which reality seems to be abstract and intangible: a mixture of the present and the past; a kind of limbo with no exit. "Alienated," one might well say, but if one has not read Robbe-Grillet's novels and is not familiar with his theories (and there is absolutely no reason why a movie-goer should be) *Last Year at Marienbad* will simply be seen for what it is—an excessively slow, misty, mawkish love-story. All the rest is just superimposed.

On the whole, *The Eclipse* is the same kind of thing—a long-drawn-out, murky, preposterously sentimental love-story. The fact that there is no happy ending does not alter this. If, as Moravia would have us believe, the concept of alienation is also lurking in *The Eclipse* then all we can say is that a "superimposed" would-be intellectuality has been added to the sentimentality. For a spectator who is not preoccupied with the notion of "alienation," it is difficult to find a clear meaning in the juxtaposition of images showing the meetings, pawings, and partings of a young man and a young woman, plus a few fine shots of the pandemonium of the Stock Exchange. Nor can we see why a picture of a woman staring fixedly out of a window should be considered an image of alienation; or what idea is supposed to be suggested by the recurrent photograph of a piece of wood floating in a barrel of water. The difference between the spectator who is willing to read profound meanings and symbols into the film and the uninitiated spectator who has no such predisposition, reaches a point where in the final sequence the former discerns an image of the apocalypse while the latter perceives only fatuously long, slow shots of nightfall or some kind of darkness covering a section of Rome. There is absolutely nothing in the images themselves to tell us we are witnessing an eclipse.

OUR AGE has been called "the civilisation of the image" and with reason. It has almost irreparably confused word with image, as it has confused a presence that is directly perceived with a photographic or phonographic replica. Caught off guard by the suggestive power of the new mechanical means of communication, most people come to believe that an image "says" much more than a word, and is infinitely more suggestive. Now, it is not surprising that untrained spectators fall into this trap, but when intellectuals, the guardians of rational language, confound confusion by giving it a theoretical basis, the situation becomes serious. For when, in their analysis of movies, they talk about words and images as if they were identical, they are adding the persuasive power of words to the suggestive force of images, justifying the belief of ordinary people in the reality of their mirages. So it is only natural that makers of films begin to think of a film as a kind of novel or poem, and by the same token begin to consider themselves writers, or even sociologists, moralists, and reformers. They have fallen victim to the cinematic fallacy: the assumption that complex emotions and subtle ideas, which can be expressed adequately only in language, can be rendered in moving photographs. And they turn out films in which they use images as if they were words pregnant with profound, if vague, meanings instead of employing them to create the illusion of a real event.

However, since cinematic images can never have the value of words, no matter how masterly the director's technique nor how sophisticated his intentions, these movies are distinguished by the boredom they arouse in an audience, keeping it interminably waiting for a meaning that is never given. The film time passes emptily, without action or events; this is exactly the opposite of what should happen at the cinema.

If we disregard what we actually see, hear, and feel we can, of course, affirm anything whatever, defend any thesis whatever, and claim to have seen, heard, and felt anything we care to. In the case of the films this is particularly easy, as the cinematic image can blend with, absorb, and adapt itself to practically any meaning we wish to impose on it. The reason is that, never being able to signify anything other than itself,

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impervious and indifferent to verbal meanings, the cinematic image can support interpretations that are absolutely contradictory. But in order to impose intellectual or symbolic meaning on a succession of images that have been combined in a particular fashion, we are obliged to "read" the film as if it were a series of separate, static, abstract pictures, and not the deliberately continuous, forward-moving composition of images it is supposed to be. That was the Surrealists' way of reading films and also of making them, with results that were at times striking.

BUT IT IS A FACT that the meaning of a single image in a film depends entirely on its cinematic context (provided that a tree is not made to represent a mountain or a locomotive). Pudovkin, in developing his theory of montage, explains this very well. He also shows clearly how the art of the director consists in compelling the spectator to experience a particular feeling, arousing in him the desired emotional reflex by means of a certain juxtaposition of images and groups of images. Conversely, what the spectator accepts as the film's plot or meaning is simply the order the director has given to a definite selection of images.

However, the spectator of a movie sees what the director means him to only if certain gestures and certain combinations of images evoke the required emotions, and signify what they were intended to, immediately. In other words, the effectiveness of a movie depends on the same kind of complicity between director and spectator that binds orator and crowd, journalist and newspaper reader. The success of a film is rooted in a certain contemporaneity: the feeling of immediacy it arouses.

All we have to do is to see a film twenty years old to realise how ephemeral the cinematic idiom is. The movies, which at first glance seem to speak the most realistic and unequivocal language, quickly become stiff, mannered, and unreal. Not only will the action of an old movie seem absurdly slow or preposterously fast, the plot itself will be far from clear. The smile that so often comes to our lips when we view such a film is caused precisely by our awareness of the disparity between the meaning which the director originally led his public to find in it, and the one it assumes for us, as it breaks up into a series of stylised and arbitrary images. The interpretation of a succession of gestures and movements which once was so obvious that the resultant emotion became a simple reflex, is no longer valid; or at any rate it no longer holds the centre of our attention. The single images scatter like the beads of a broken necklace; and each one seems to disclose only its own meaning. For what are they but feeble shadows of a life that is over, relics of a "time" that is not just past but dead, existing only in the immediacy of fugitive gestures.

YET CINEMATIC IMAGES are fascinating in themselves, apart from the story they tell. For one thing, they imperiously occupy the field of consciousness, even when they do not really interest us. Under their domination, the eye wanders in search of curious or suggestive details, which it always manages to find. Everyone has had the experience of getting through a tedious movie by observing details at random. When all is said and done, one sequence of moving images is as entertaining as another. Since there is action and change going on continuously, we can always find something to look at on the screen. Fundamentally, the fascination the cinema exercises over us comes from the fact that it presents us with facsimiles of real objects and real people moving and changing exactly as they do in real life without our having to bear the burden of anxiety and suffering that accompany action in real life. And, above all, without the inevitable travail of participation, judgment, and responsibility which real life continually demands.

WHAT I AM saying is that highbrow and arty films, tedious as they may be because of their slowness and their insistent suggestion of hidden ideas, are not essentially different from movies filled with excitement and action. They, too, in the final analysis, present us with a certain number of images to look at. If we are not interested in the meanings the director meant the comings and goings of the characters to have, we can always look at the landscape, try to guess the location of the street the hero is loitering on so long; or scrutinise the furniture in rooms, or the star's clothes. In fact, we do exactly what we do when, obliged to wait for someone or something, we become idle spectators of life.

But the crucial problem is elsewhere, as Dina Dreyfus clearly shows in an article in *Diogenes* (No. 35) on the relation between cinema and language in films of the Resnais-Antonioni school. She believes that the problem lies in the "deliberate intention to minimise the meaningfulness of words in order to increase the importance of images; to dethrone the former in order to enthrone the latter; and, by discrediting language as such, to accredit the idea that there is such a thing as a language of images."

According to Dina Dreyfus, this project oscillates between contradictory claims.

> On one hand, the cinema is considered objective. Which means that it approaches the human through the mediation of things; it tries to reach the internal through the mediation of the ex-

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ternal. The image manifests itself with the total *opaqueness* that only a *thing* can have; and nothing can be seen through it. A desert isle does not signify human solitude and incomprehension. It *is* that solitude. A pile of clothes in the middle of a darkened room does not signify the love act. It *is* the act itself. The image has no other-world. Solitude becomes a thing; and the desert isle is not empty because man has momentarily departed, but because he is eternally absent from it.

Now this claim to objectivity is immediately denied and contradicted by another aim. The cinema wants to signify; it wants to *say* something; and it wants to say it in images and not in words. Verbal discourse is then inessential. But the image wants to transcend itself as image in order to signify *interiority*, which is extraneous to it, and which its aim at objectivity contradicts. It is clear that this interiority, which belongs only to human motives, intentions, thoughts, feelings, impressions, desires, the cinema cannot *express* without denying its own nature.... But since it now becomes a question of *expressing* by means of the image a subjectivity that... cannot be transmitted as such into the image, the latter is forced to transcend itself and take on a verbal or discoursive meaning, without changing its nature.... The cinema attempts the impossible synthesis of the immanent and the transcendent; the interior and the exterior.... The empty landscape, and the train that disappears over the horizon become symbols; we are back with the Romantics' notion of the landscape that expresses a mood.... No matter what path the cinema chooses, it is irresistibly drawn to the opposite one. If it takes one direction, it sins by omission: the image suggests or evokes, because it *cannot say*. Hence its ambiguity and its inferiority to language proper. If it takes the other direction it sins by excess: the image suggests and evokes because, we think, it can say much more, much better and more fully than words can. Hence, its presumed superiority to language proper... it can say *everything*.

THIS INSUPERABLE CONTRADICTION, which clearly reveals the limitations of cinematographic language, helps us to understand the experiments of directors like Resnais, Antonioni, and Bergman, as well as the reasons for their inevitable failure. Attempting to distort the nature of the cinematic image by forcing it to express ideological or lyrical meaning can only result in pretentiousness and emptiness. The image is irremediably external; it is absolutely incapable of representing inner life, subjectivity, or personality. It can only allude to them, and try to "illustrate" them by the external signs which are its material. To ask for more than this is asking too much. The idea that by combining the resources of the cinema with those of literature one can nullify their respective limitations is absurd. It really means the destruction of all limits.

WHAT THE CINEMA has discovered is the universe of external signs, which is indubitable, certain, and self-contained, since it leaves no gap between intention and act, and no place for ambiguity. In this universe motives, feelings, and ideas are completely transmuted into corporeal signs (and this is how the mirage arises). Since it is impossible to represent inner life on the screen, the suggestive intensity of gesture, of immediate presence, and of rapid, functional dialogue is exploited to make up for it. The priests of the highbrow cinema resort to these devices; and the result is a deliberate debasement of the inner life; at the same time they want the image to express the soul and its ineffable torments (the *vague à l'âme*) with a concreteness that words never could achieve. Now it is simply not possible to have it both ways. The cinematographic image is a sign, not a symbol. It is the trace of subjectivity, not its expression.

Following this path *à rebours* from literature to cinema, we are thrown back to those films of the 1910s, based on "expressive" posing, mannered photography, and that tiresome immobility which is supposed to be pregnant with meanings (although they exist only in the director's mind). These films bore us to death. For every time that the camera pauses, and fatuously dwells on details not connected with an action that is immediately clear; every time that it does not prick our curiosity about what is going to happen next, the picture is simply tedious. In the period of silent movies some immobility was inevitable (except in scenes of slapstick comedy and break-neck action), and a slow pace was technically necessary, since the director had to get as much suggestive power out of the image as possible. Those who are now returning to such methods are guilty of æstheticism, for this movement backwards is a deliberate one, and its techniques are arty and pretentious in themselves.

BUT THE GROSSNESS peculiar to motion pictures as a medium of expression automatically destroys every attempt to impose literary significance on them. The picture of a woman who stares and stares and stares into space simply makes us laugh, and so does all action that is unnaturally slow. It is not that the images themselves are comical, but that the intention of the director is inane, flagrantly contradicting, as it does, the nature of his medium. There is no escape from the essential simple-mindedness of the movies. The attempts of cinema intellectuals to express complex feelings necessarily end in coarse sentimentality. Their efforts to suggest ideas result in wringing abstruse meanings out of images, which by nature are deaf

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and dumb unless they are elements in a sequence of rapid actions.

The one thing a film cannot do is express complex ideas or meanings; and forcing it to do so puts a brake on movement (which is the very essence of the movies) slowing it down to a complete stop in order to suggest a significance that goes beyond the image. But in the movies there is nothing but a void beyond the image. So, for example, an empty street which is supposed to indicate (who knows how or why) the state of mind of a character—to say nothing of the ideas of the director—is simply a static image. It indicates nothing. The picture of an empty street can be superb as photography, but it is only the picture of an empty street. Nor can technical tricks or ideological comment make it say more than it does. What actually happens when a single image is imposed on us for too long a time, is that we are reduced to a state of stupefaction, not knowing what we are supposed to feel. A static image breaks the spell of the movies by betraying the expectation of uninterrupted action that has been aroused, and jolts us from a moving world to a motionless one. The effect is disastrous, for our mind begins to work on its own; either we are completely distracted, or we start associating automatically on the theme, "empty street." But more often we are just bored. And I can think of no worse boredom.

At such moments we become aware of the fact that the movie has the effect, not of directing and ordering the flow of our thoughts around the themes suggested by the pictures on the screen, but of stopping the flow completely, submerging it in a cascade of images. It is as difficult to get back from them to the theme as it is to awake from the effects of a drug. Furthermore, the intellectual cinema uses actors not as sources of actions and gestures but as suggestive and almost inanimate objects. Reduced to the condition of things, actors find it more difficult than ever to express emotions and moods. All they can do is to assume poses.

And the purpose of all this is to escape from the elementary fact that poetry and cinematographic images are at opposite poles. Not only does an image "express without saying," as Dina Dreyfus writes, but it hurdles, so to speak, ordinary discourse in order to achieve an indicatory and emotional force that common words—*les mots de la tribu*—cannot possibly emulate. Obviously, the palpitating image of a thing is infinitely more effective than its verbal label.

Nevertheless, it has nothing to do with discourse and its logical order, where feelings and ideas are mirrored, or with poetry. In fact, the emotion aroused by a cinematic image is similar to that aroused by a spectacle or an event which we happen to witness in real life. For no matter how skilful film directors and actors are, they do not use evocative symbols but images, the indicative unequivocal signs made by the imprint of objects on the screen. Through the cinematic images we can apprehend the world only from the outside, for because of their nature, they are unable to render subjective experience, or to penetrate the world seen through an idea, a conviction, a form, or a passion—which is the world of art as we have always understood it. The cinema can allude to the inner life only to the degree that movements of the body correspond to movements of the soul. But it is obvious that the body can express complex states of mind only very vaguely. We can photograph a motionless person, or a face with a fixed stare, in order to show anguish or sadness. But the image will never render the quality of the anguish or sadness, which is, after all, what matters. The cinema derives its power from its ability to arouse an emotional reaction that is both immediate and certain. Whereas a poem or a novel cannot come alive without the reader's elaboration; its power of suggestion is a construction of his mind, calling into play his sensibility, and his intellectual and imaginative faculties.

It is indeed because they are striving to achieve the allusiveness of poetry, encouraging the spectator to participate in the creation of meaning, that the intellectualistic film directors attempt to use cinematic images as if they were words; thus they keep them in a zone of crepuscular ambiguity, as far removed as possible from their obvious and apparent meaning. But they strive in vain. After all, a cinematic idiom, with its innumerable possibilities does exist, even though it is qualitatively limited. It is the language of signs that describe the external, in all its certainty and completeness. In this language every sign is clear, the meaning of every gesture is immediately comprehensible, and vagueness is excluded by definition.

The resources of the cinema are enormously rich. It has at its disposal a realm where all is explicit and accessible, where act immediately follows on intention, and where real life is magically transformed into a series of clear and definite events. But it is certainly not through the cinema that we can explore what Heraclitus called the "confines of the soul."

Speaking of the relation between thought and image from the point of view of a scientific psychology, Alfred Binet once said that from an idea worth a hundred thousand francs, we get images worth a sou. With images worth a sou, certain movie-makers would like to get ideas worth a hundred thousand francs. The operation, however, cannot be reversed.

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POETRY

The Difficult Muse

By Desmond Stewart

NO MUSE is easy, but the Arabian is the most difficult. She meets no one half-way. Perhaps because she has so excelled at flattering (princes, rather than Pindaric athletes; holders of power, however temporary, rather than of beauty) she is herself indifferent to fame; and having lasted intact, the same, for at least fourteen centuries, the Arabian Muse is patient. She survived the dislike of the Prophet;* she can survive the ignorance of a century. She is in little hurry to become known outside her empire, since inside it she has the incense her nostrils relish. She is so established in Arabia, so old, so unquestioned, that she cares little if her applause is selective. The young men still gasp at a cunning rhyme; the young women at a heightened sentiment; the elderly at an allusion. Their gasps are a richer tribute than her cousins of Parnassus have long received. She remains difficult; she eludes us.

Why then try to drag her from her sand dune and introduce her to the fogs and factories of the West?

Or, more sensible question, since the West wishes to drag all things to herself: how?

Horace boasted that he was the first to draw into Italy the Muses of Greece, by which he meant the metres of Alcaeus and Sappho. Yet Catullus had already written a fair equivalent of the *phainetai moi* from which the Roman reader could have an impression in Latin of what Sappho was like. No one can boast of having anglicised the Arabian Muse. There has been no poetry written in English on the Arabian model; no approximation even. And description is no substitute. "The verbal intensity of Pope with the emotional intensity of Shelley, and the frankness of Lawrence"—but such nominal cocktails confuse rather than explain.

No English poetry in Arabian style. What about translations? Is there no FitzGerald, no Waley, no Pound? Is there even no guide, no scholar to conduct the English reader to the Arabian poets as expertly as Mr. Jackson Knight has guided us to Roman Virgil, or Sir Maurice Bowra to Sophocles?

The names of Professors Nicholson and Arberry occur, almost without competitors: we shall return to them.

But first, what are the problems?

THE first is one of language. Arabic is a labyrinthine palace of ice and basalt, bigger and grander than Versailles. But the kings who built it are dead; the rooms are camped in by loyal admirers of the kings who have forgotten the kings' names; they are not sure what this room was for, or that. Did this fountain ever *work*? Was it always a piece of decoration? Thus questioned (when the visitors wish to do more than gape at what is impressive because unknown) the guide will some times put on buskin and abba, to declaim (very monotonously, because it is a legend that the kings had no expression in their monstrous voices), to strut, to show us how it all was, when the palace was lived in. "More than a hundred words for camel, or lion, or sword," he will say, to people who have never seen a lion except on Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, who have never held a sword in their fingers, let alone hit at someone with it, and who use motor cars, not camels, to go from city to city. And just as Versailles was built for a host of courtiers who excreted in the corridors —because the builders planned no water closets —so the visitor will ask in vain for words to describe such modern interests as *ideology*. To such ideas there are approximations, more or less exact; or the caretakers import and arabise *television*, *penicillin*, *cinema*, as the guide in the Palace imports a refrigerator and lets it vibrate white and ugly beside the rococo. "Ready understanding of this classical poetry has for many centuries been out of reach for even the

* Koran XXVI: 224.

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educated speaker of Arabic." (G. E. Von Grunebaum, *Islam*.) And many Arabs use English or French to write letters, because they can be more natural in those tongues, more colloquial, while in Arabic they are forced to put on a grander, and more remote, identity.

The language, then, is an immense puzzle palace, lived in by those who hardly understand its functions or its beauties.

And to use, a maze more difficult to enter than Greek or Persian. At least the strange words in Greek can have English words put under them, word following word, and the reader who knows only the alphabet can partly understand. The same with Italian, or any other Aryan language; the same with Persian, which is a distant cousin of our own tongues. But Arabic is a Semitic language of immense complexity and intricate grammar. It is not the language of a semibarbarous people, as is classical Hebrew, where simplicity makes even the Semitic tolerably easy to translate. Instead, Arabic is the repository of the thought and feeling of a world empire, the equal of the Roman, and lasting longer. Into the language has been poured—and the pouring has enlarged and perfected the vessel—the thought of a world religion shared by different races from Morocco to Indonesia, the law of a world system. And all this is in a society more often over-sophisticated than primitive; a society of courtiers more than prophets, of politicians concealing their thoughts in verbal dexterity.

ARABIC is a pure language in a way in which no European language is pure. Hitler wished to expel from German the Italic borrowings; but the title of his party retained two Latin derivatives, Nation and Socialist. Ataturk tried to purge Turkish, and instead of the Arabic *mahatta* coined the hardly Turanian *istasyon*. In England, except for 19th-century pedants who wished to change *perambulator* to *pushwain*, we have recognised that our genius is to be bastard: to accept all and quickly adopt it as our own. Only perhaps Gaelic has the same power as Arabic to build up from within itself all the words needed for conceptual talk. But Gaelic society withered early; its language began to wilt before even the kettle was invented; and it remains a tragically beautiful lost language, the spiritual twin of simple cooking pots and bracken fires and unkempt colleens in draughty huts. The Gaels left their genius in the veins of those who conquered them, and then withdrew into their marshes and mountains, towards Skye and western Ireland, in later times merely to be obedient soldiers of the money-power established in London, or to emigrate yet further west to the mists of Newfoundland and Nova Scotia. They never wrestled to bring into their own language the complexities of a more complex life. If they had done so, the cause of reviving Gaelic would not to-day be so forlorn.

But the linguistic genius of the Arabs rivals their energy to survive: they have wrestled, and can still wrestle, to bring every concept that the mind of man can conceive into Arabic: weaving it from a verbal system where a simple root undergoes metamorphoses far more complex than our own gamut of passivity and action.

Early on, when they confronted the decay of Mediterranean glory, they adopted certain Greek ideas, just as for their mosques they employed Greek artisans to work out Islamic forms. (And thus the Mosque of Omar in Jerusalem is both one of the first Arabic masterworks, and one of the last Hellenic.) Some words like *philosophia* or *geographia* were arabised into *felsafah* and *jeghrafiyah*. But this trend was alien to Arabic. It could create such concepts as nation or socialism from within itself. (Unfortunately, the pure Arabic *hātif* is ousted, in common speech, by the cosmopolitan *telefōn*.)

When the language decayed, which it did during the centuries of Ottoman domination, the sense of Arabic as a means of communication was sometimes lost: both through the illiteracy of the Arab masses, and the confining of Arabic culture to a small minority (always the road to suicide in a national culture); and also because in those centuries language began to be regarded as a means to impress:

> to conceal the monotony of his spirit behind a fireworks of allusions and tropes, rendering facts and the substance of things subservient to æsthetical pleasure. Cleverness and delicacy of taste, an awareness of nuances almost painful to the modern Occidental, produce fragile masterpieces of incredible refinement but of utter sterility and emptiness—documents of an intellect sensitive only to its own satisfaction. (G. E. Von Grunebaum.)

A once precise language became imprecise: because the people, the folk, no longer understood precisely its meaning, and because those who used it, used it in the wrong way, for the wrong purpose.

Here at last there is a parallel with English. In the 19th century, writers of Swinburne's school, but without his genius, used words in the coloured, meaningless, semi-emotive way which Ezra Pound was to attack: imposing a metre as regular as a metronome's on matter as lively as casts filched from a museum. Pound wrote to Harriet Monroe in 1915 words which would be applicable to the situation of writers in Arabic:

> There must be no clichés, set phrases, stereotyped journalese. The only escape from such is

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by precision, a result of concentrated attention to what one is writing. The test of a writer is his ability for such concentration AND for his power to stay concentrated till he gets to the end of his poem, whether it is two lines or two hundred.

Objectivity and again objectivity, and expression: no hindside-beforeness, no straddled adjectives (as "addled mosses dank"), no Tennysonianness of speech; nothing—nothing that you couldn't, in some circumstance, in the stress of some emotion, actually say. Every literaryism, every book word, fritters away a scrap of the reader's patience, a scrap of his sense of your sincerity. When one really feels and thinks, one stammers with simple speech; it is only in the flurry, the shallow frothy excitement of writing, or the inebriety of a metre, that one falls into the easy—oh, so easy!—speech of books and poems that he has read....

THIS discussion of the state of Arabic up till this century is important to establish the inadequacy of any Arabic guides to Arabic literature. Modern Arabic criticism is for the most part subjective, the critic's interest being in the discovery of "beauties of the national heritage," and the "subject" himself steeped in "Tennysonianness of speech." Still more inadequate are the foreign guides, for example R. A. Nicholson, whose extraordinary *Literary History of the Arabs* was published in 1907 and has been reprinted regularly ever since. Extraordinary: because this book of devoted scholarship has both seized the field, and killed off all the vegetation. A voluminous book of nearly 500 pages, it resembles to me a compendium of French food and wines written by someone with no liking for either: every vintage is listed, every sauce, but the author would prefer fish and chips.

As a list of vintages it is more than complete (though stopping short of the last several centuries):

> Among the notable savants of this epoch we may mention Ibn 'Abdi Rabbihi (A.D. 940), laureate of 'Abdu 'l-Rahmán III and author of a well-known anthology entitled al-'Iqd al-Faríd; the poet Ibn Háni of Seville (A.D. 973), an Ismá'ílí convert who addressed blasphemous panegyrics to the Fátimid Caliph Mu'izz....

Yet amidst the pages telling of names, names, and more names, and among the chapters devoted to dead caliphates and deader factions, three pages are devoted to Abu Nuwas, Iraq's greatest poet. Nicholson begins by arousing certain expectations. "It is often forgotten that he was a great poet who, in the opinion of those most competent to judge, takes rank above all his contemporaries and successors, including even Mutanabbi, and is not surpassed in poetical genius by any ancient bard." The word "bard" perhaps diminishes our expectation: but even so, in a work devoted to nothing but a history of Arabic literature, we cannot fail to be excited: here is the best sauce, or rather, the best vintage: ranking above all contemporaries, and even all successors. The student anxious to know about Arabic poetry (and who else would buy the book?) may be forgiven if he expects that something will come across. But after a page of biography (*Hasan b. Hani gained the familiar title of Abú Nuwás, Father of the lock of hair, from two locks which hung down on his shoulders. He was born of humble parents about the middle of the eighth century, in Ahwáz, the capital of Khúzistán. That he was not a pure Arab the name of his mother, Jallabán, clearly indicates...*) after listing the kinds of poems which Abú Nuwás wrote—panegyric, satire, songs of the chase, elegies and religious poems—we are told "love and wine were the two motives by which his genius was most brilliantly inspired. His wine-songs (*khamriyyát*) are generally acknowledged to be incomparable." And we are given one in translation:

Thou scolder of the grape and me,
I ne'er shall win thy smile!
Because against thee I rebel,
'Tis churlish to revile.

Ah, breathe no more the name of wine
Until thou cease to blame,
For fear that thy foul tongue should smirch
Its fair and lovely name!

Come, pour it out, ye gentle boys,
A vintage ten years old,
That seems as though t'were in the cup
A lake of liquid gold.

And when the water mingles there,
To fancy's eyes are set
Pearls over shining pearls close strung
As in a carcanet.

Another short extract is given: which in no way makes of this poet more than a sickly imitation of a minor Suckling; and then Nicholson says: "We must now bid farewell to Abú Nuwás and the licentious poets (*al-shu'ará al-mujján*)...." And many students must wish at this point to bid farewell to the Arabian Muse as well: for a poetry of which the quoted verses are the summit must appear to the reader Dutch.

PROFESSOR A. J. Arberry deserves better of the student than his forerunner. At least books such as *The Seven Odes** provide the reader with material on which to form his own

* A. J. Arberry, *The Seven Odes* (Allen & Unwin, 25s.).

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judgments. The professor cannot be blamed for not being a poet. Speaking of the ancient Arabs, he quotes again the much-quoted saying of Ibn Rashiq that "they prided themselves on three things—the birth of a boy, the emergence of a poet in their midst, or the foaling of a mare." No doubt a modern household enthuses over the birth of a professor. But someone as insensitive to languages as this particular professor who writes "that the ancient Arab bard was the public relations officer of his tribe. But it is safe to assert that no hand-out from Whitehall was ever couched in such vigorous and majestic language"... should perhaps he careful before taxing other translators of Arabic poetry with that pedantic over-scrupulosity which makes so many scholars' translations virtually unreadable. *The Seven Odes* is a useful book. It gives the background material necessary to an understanding of the great seven odes of pre-islamic time, the Mu'allaqat. It also gives some interesting translations of these poems into German, Italian, Latin, and English. The republication of some of Sir William Jones' 18th-century work is of value:

Mount TEBEIR stands in the heights of the
flood like a venerable chief wrapped in a
striped mantle.
The summit of MOGAIMIR, covered with the
rubbish which the torrent has rolled down,
looks in the morning like the top of a
spindle encircled with wool.
The cloud unloads its freight on the desert of
GHABEIT, like a merchant of YEMEN
alighting with his bales of rich apparel.
The small birds of the valley warble at day-
break, as if they had taken their early draught
of generous wine mixed with spice.
The beasts of the wood, drowned in the floods
of night, float, like the roots of wild onions,
at the distant edge of the lake.

This shows at least that the Arabian Muse can be biblical and stern, and not insipidly literary like Nicholson's. Professor Arberry's own abilities as a translator are in advance of Nicholson's; but the passages which excel in Arabic are precisely those in which both translators fall down. Professor Arberry is excellent where he can be pedestrian. For example, Tarafa's description of a racing camel. The Bedouin poet lavishes on his mount what an Albigensian would have polished for his mistress, or a Wordsworth for a ruin:

her two thighs—
they are the gates of a lofty, smooth-walled
castle—
and tightly knit are her spine-bones, the ribs like
bows,
her underneck stuck with the well-strung verte-
brae,
fenced about by the twin dens of a wild lote-
tree;
you might say bows were bent under a buttressed
spine.
Widely spaced are her elbows, as if she strode
carrying the two buckets of a sturdy water-
carrier;
like the bridge of the Byzantine, whose builder
swore
it should all be encased in bricks to be raised up
true.
Reddish the bristles under her chin, very firm
her back,
broad the span of her swift legs, smooth her
swinging gait;
her legs are twined like rope uptwisted; her fore-
arms
thrust slantwise up to the propped roof of her
breast.
Swiftly she rolls, her cranium huge, her shoulder-
blades
high-hoisted to frame her lofty, raised super-
structure.

But less successful is his translation from a poem of greater intensity, where Imr al-Qais boasts of his assaults as a lover: his ode being one of the most intense and sensual descriptions of physical love ever written:

Many's the pregnant woman like you, aye, and
the nursing mother
I've night-visited, and made her forget her
amuleted one-year-old;
whenever he whimpered behind her, she turned
to him
with half her body, her other half unshifted
under me.

And ten lines on:

Many's the fair veiled lady, whose tent few would
think of seeking,
I've enjoyed sporting with, and not in a hurry
either,
slipping past packs of watchmen to reach her,
with a whole tribe
Hankering after my blood, eager every man-jack
to slay me,
What time the Pleiades showed themselves
broadly in Heaven
Glittering like the folds of a woman's bejewelled
scarf.
I came, and already she'd stripped off her
garments for sleep
Beside the tent-flap, all but a single flimsy slip;
And she cried. "God's oath, man, you won't get
away with this!
The folly's not left you; I see you're as feckless
as ever."

Generally, this version seems to me both arch and hearty, while particular objections stand out. In addition to the archaism of "Many's the fair veiled lady" and "what time," the phrase

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"fair veiled lady" is not particularly apt for the tattooed Beduin woman, whom Imr al-Qais seduces which she is still suckling her young child. Imr al-Qais was not archaic in his day; nor was his dialogue mannered. Mr. Arberry may be excused for not evoking a Beduin world which even to the Arabs of the Caliphate was beginning to seem remote: but by the choice of such a word as "slip," he also shows himself little in touch with the world of 20th-century beaches. For the fact that the rhyme is gone, and the rhythm of the original, the translator cannot be blamed.

THE phrase about the Pleiades may introduce a more constructive note, after what has been said of the inadequacy of guides and translators, and of how little of the majesty of Arabic poetry, or its subtlety, has been brought into English. A brief quotation from a book written nine centuries ago may suggest the wealth of Arabic imagery, may suggest what is waiting there, for the man who will be the Horace to Ibn ar-Rumi or Abú Nuwás, and will bring into English what has so long been hidden. Al-Baqillani lived in Iraq in the 10th century, and devoted his life to theology and religious polemic. He was a cultivated man, but not a professional literary critic: a Bede, rather than a Quintilian. A pious Muslim, he composed a work entitled *I'jaz al Qur'an* in which, to justify the superior eloquence and linguistic nobility of the word of God, un-create, eternal, he took the Ode of Imr al-Qais and showed that its admired phrases were mediocre compared with the oratory of Allah. His purpose, therefore, in introducing poetry was not the purpose of a critic, or even an admirer of the poets. And yet, in his time and place, his poetical culture can only astonish the modern reader.

Having debated whether the Pleiades do pass along in the sky obliquely, as the poet says, "like the parts of the sash, studded with gems," al-Baqillani continues:*

> You know that neither the earlier nor the later poets have accorded such adequate treatment to any star as they have to the Pleiades. Every one of them has produced something new and beautiful. . . . Thus, for example, the verse of Du'r-Rumma:
>
> *I descended to the water-place riding at random while the Pleiades over my head looked like a high-circling crane.*

Likewise the verse of Ibn al-Mu'tazz:

> *And you see the Pleiades in the sky as though they were eggs of an ostrich's hatching-place shining in the desert ground.*

And his verse:

> *The Pleiades in the latter part of the night resemble the opening of a blossom or a silver-studded bridle.*

Further his verse:

> *He handed me the the wine while the Pleiades shone as though they were freshly plucked narcissi with which the cap-bearer greets the boon-companions.*

Likewise the verse of al-Ashab b. Rumaila:

> *To him who nightly travelled the Pleiades shone as though they were ear-rings chained near the Western brim of the horizon.*

Ibn al-Mutazz further said:

> *The Pleiades drop and the Gemini follow them like a woman who reaches out for her ear-rings which have fallen to the ground.*

He has taken over this idea from Ibn ar-Rumi who says:

> *His saliva is sweet when you taste his mouth while the Pleiades in the western sky are ear-rings.*

Ibn al-Mu'tazz says:

> *He gave me wine to drink when the morning was still wrapped in the night*
> *and when the Pleiades like the blossoms of a twig scattered over the earth.*

And he also says:

> *The Pleiades are eager to set*
> *Just as a fiery horse bends down its head when on the point of getting into bridle.*

Ibn at-Tataiyya says:

> *When the Pleiades were in the sky as though they were pearls scattered from their broken string.*

> If I had employed for you all the original phrases the poets have employed in the description of the Pleiades this book would have become too long and have exceeded its purpose. . . .

This extract, with the list of imagery known to one man to be connected with the Pleiades, hints at the wealth of Arabic; and hints, too, at the kind of wealth it is. There have been poets, such as al-Ma'ari, whose interest lies in their thought. But the Arab genius has best expressed itself in detail—in its best period, in an impassioned realism of description: in comparing the known to the known, where the poet is guided by fresh eyes. (Just as in Fatimid pottery, the minstrels and horsemen are delicately crude but living; while the later Rhodian and Turkish ware is empty, brilliant sophistication, little more.) This skill has not departed

* From the excellent, accurate, bare version of G. E. Von Grunebaum.

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from Arab poets, as is shown by the lines on doves by the modern Palestinian poet, Ibrahim Touqan. (He died, still a young man, in 1941.) My translation conveys nothing of the onomatopœia of the original, which echoes the voice of the doves.

Two troops on the two banks, standing haphazard where they fell,
Each kisses her picture in the water as she drinks,
As they shake their heads drops cling to their necks like pearls.
Being thus cooled, they fly again to the branches, their cradles;
The clapping of their wings displays their contentment;
And when the dusk approaches, you think them headless;
To the fullness of their lids, heads hidden under their wings, they sleep.

More typical, however, of modern Arabic poetry is the Carducci-like Ahmed Showki: nationalistic, rhetorical, and engaged. Such poetry naturally appeals to the hearts of those fighting for liberation; only perhaps later, when the battle is won, or the cause forgotten, does such poetry wear less well than the brief, unforgettable comparison of a constellation to a silver-studded bridle or a bunch of narcissi. Yet Showki's *Bombardment of Damascus* has as much passion and indignation as Carducci, or even Pushkin.*

Courts of the soul, alas for you—what has befallen her,
was Damascus really constrained to such a lesson?

Many of Showki's poems were put to music and sung; Umm Kalthum told me that she (the most powerful-voiced and popular of all Arab singers) had regarded her life-work as bringing the Arab poets from the libraries and into the souls of her people.

> Before I sang his poems, Showki was unknown among the people. He was considered difficult. But when the people heard me singing his poems, when the words sank into their consciousness, then they began to love him as I love him.

For the non-Arab who wishes to understand what Arabic poetry is about, and what it is worth, there are three possible paths: to learn Arabic (which may take a decade of his life), to probe through translations, or to listen to Arabic singing. This last is not impossible. Umm Kalthum has made countless short-playing records—though her songs, which often last an hour, cry out for the slower-turning variety. Fairuz, the young Lebanese singer, has a voice more immediately attractive, more western, while yet spontaneous and of the mountain villages of Lebanon. Her songs (available in Parlophone's *Voix d'Orient* series) show the delicacy possible in this guttural language; Umm Kalthum shows the power, comparable to that of Flagstad: while Muhammad Abdul Wahab's operetta *Qais and Layla* (sung by himself with the Druze princess, Asmahan; the theme of Romeo and Juliet) shows the intensity and pathos.

But for this poetry that has lasted for fourteen centuries, and that excels in what Pound calls *melopoeia* and *phanopoeia*, translators who both know Arabic and are aware of the revolution in poetics since Swinburne and Chesterton are required. Music is only part of poetry. (Mr. Aldington in a recent one-sentence letter claimed it is a small part. *Sir—Aural poetry: in at one ear and out at the other.*) And for translators to flourish, benevolent and generous publishers must encourage, with money as well as sympathy. Could one of them bring out translations with the Arabic alongside, in phonetic transcription into Latin letters, so that the reader can at least limp with the text? The phonetics should be simple, without too many rough and smooth breathings, or "h"s and "d"s with dots underneath. (Pedantry as much as bad translation can cover a Muse with sand.) And could another advertise in the agony columns of ENCOUNTER for a potential Horace, with ten years of his life to spare? The bribe should be a small villa, perhaps on Mount Lebanon, or if that is too dangerous, on the sea, near Tunis? And a select library, and a good cook.

* From the translation by Alan Neame.

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Leonard Nathan

War and the Seasons

Four Poems After Subjects From Tu Fu

(*for Shih-Hsiang Chen*)

I. Spring in the Fallen City

Down this great avenue where civil oaks
Kept a long peace and nurtured strolling grass,
Wildflowers riot, violence for their colour:
There is no grief in them or in the cock
Whose dawning cry breaks as it always has
Though watchfires died and broken tower to tower
Sentinels shiver to pass the word in dark.
The mail cannot get through and so I dream
Of how, in a hopeful town, you children are—
Idle and useless, dream; but spring again
That somewhat buries tramped walls; the stream,
Of course, and hills abide, whatever's done.
I lift my comb and wonder why I care.

II. Summer Night From My Room

Darkness comes to make another world:
The air is fresh bamboo to breathe; the land,
A cool shape of lustre of the moon
Where dew shatters the silver that has filled
My courtyard; stars, like dew and one by one,
Scatter far shine, till night on every hand
Is streaked with flares, even to fireflies.
White fog along the river cries with birds
That can't be seen from here, their obscure work
Taking them, all wildness, to the core
Of their own mystery—words and words and words,
While everything on earth makes usual war.
And sitting in my bed, I dwell on dark.

III. Autumn Night on the Frontier

Drums of the watch that signal all around
Now make the moonlight strange, and rushing geese
Sing autumn, autumn to this last frontier.
The dew is farther than the stars and peace
Is foreign, mere suspension of all sound,
Is what I can remotely dream out here:
Family I cannot reach, my absent ghosts
Of empty land! Home, the moon when full
Outshone this icy thing. So far and lost,
They are as good as dead, for letters are sent
Into a vast unechoing vacancy.
Space of this desolation, what great wall
Can hold such distance out? A windy tent,
A thousand strangers thinking much like me.

IV. Winter Exile in the Southwest

Refugee, confusion on this land,
This sky, where you have, ruined, running, come;
Where natives wear a dress so richly odd,
It exiles you again to move through cold
Into a vagrancy of rented rooms.
You could not by mere loving understand
The place you were, though all blood is one blood.
Strange men of wrath, both north and south, compelled
A grief that, ignorant how to live apart,
Sang that a man grows stupidly and old
Without a home that he can know by heart.

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"Going into Europe"

This is the second part of our inquiry into the views of "the intelligentsia" on the question of Britain, the Continent, and the Common Market. As we go to press, a number of additional contributions—from Yehudi Menuhin, Arnold Toynbee, Arnold Wesker, Richard Hoggart, Alasdair MacIntyre, Frank Norman, John Weightman, Colin Clark, D. W. Brogan, among others—have reached us, but these will have to wait until next month.

Symposium (II)

W. H. Auden:

If I shut my eyes and say the word *Europe* to myself, the various images which it conjures up have one thing in common; they could not be conjured up by the word *England*. Let me give a few of them as they occur to me, without trying to arrange them in a logical order.

Europe is the place where: (1) The fields are not divided from each other by hedges, the farms are mostly family farms, and the landless farm-hand is a rarity. (2) There is a definite social class, the Peasants, conscious of itself as such and often wielding considerable political power. (3) Very few of the aristocracy take an active part in public and political life. (4) The Liberal-Socialist Left is anti-clerical, and, for the most part, atheistic. (5) The village schoolmaster and the village doctor are usually on the political left. (6) Shops are open on Sundays and one can get a drink at any hour. (7) The only comfortable article of domestic furniture is the double-bed. (8) Hotel bedrooms are equipped with bidets. (9) Nothing is wasted. The classical vice of avarice and the miser *à la* Balzac can still be found. (10) Outside the big cities the shops never have proper wrapping paper. (11) Nationals as well as foreigners must carry identification papers and produce them when they register in a hotel. (12) In Jurisprudence, codified law plays a much greater role than case law. (13) Intellectual life has two centres: the Café, exclusively male, where artists of all kinds start "movements" and issue manifestos, and the Salon, presided over by a woman. (14) When two educated persons meet who do not know the other's language, they talk French. (15) If there are any Protestants, they are in the minority. The Protestant countries—Scandinavia, Holland, Prussia, etc.—do not *quite* belong to Europe.

Since I am a writer, the word *Europe* conjures up, in addition to such images, certain sacred names. Here are a few of mine: Lichtenberg, Hölderlin, Nietzsche, Nestroy, Rimbaud, Christian Morgenstern, Valéry, Kafka, Karl Kraus, Rudolf Kassner.

You will notice that, in this list, German names predominate. No Englishman falls in love with Europe as a whole; he falls in love with a particular landscape or city or language. It has been said that nobody ever fell in love with Bulgaria, but I have met a young Englishman who did. Like all lovers, we are prejudiced: one may love French or Italian or Spanish, but one cannot love all three equally.

I am one of those—there are not many of us—who fell in love with the German language. When I went down from Oxford in 1928, my parents offered me a year abroad. For the generation of intellectuals immediately preceding mine, the only culture that counted was French culture. I was bored with hearing about it, and, therefore, determined that, wherever I might go, it would not be to Paris. Where then? Rome? No; Mussolini and fascism made that impossible. Berlin? That was an idea! Why not? I knew no German and hardly any German literature, but, then, nobody else I knew did either. Berlin was an unexplored city and might turn out to be fun. Perhaps, also, I had an unconscious bias in favour of Germany because, when I was a little boy in prep-school during the First World War, if I took an extra slice of bread and margarine, some master was sure to say—"I see, Auden, you want the Huns to win"—thus establishing in my mind an association between Germany and forbidden pleasures....

When I ask what kinds of Englishmen have had relations to Europe, I find five groups:

(1) From the Sixteenth Century on, it was customary for the rich young heir to make the Grand Tour before settling down on his estate; this was part of his Education. In the Nineteenth Century, when they became richer, the middle-class also began to take educational trips.

(2) After 1815, and mostly to Dieppe, came the bankrupts fleeing from their creditors.

(3) About the same time, English colonies abroad were founded, composed, firstly, of those with small independent means who found that their money went further in Europe than at home, and, secondly, of artists and bohemians who found the atmosphere and climate congenial to their work and wished to lead a private life far from the eye of Mrs. Grundy.

(4) During the latter half of the Nineteenth Century it became quite common for English students to attend some European University or

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Conservatoire, to study some special subject, Theology, Medicine, Music, etc.

(5) Lastly, there came the mountain-climbers, the winter-sportsmen, and the sun-bathers.

One will never understand the current debate about England joining the Common Market if one thinks of it as merely a clash between various economic interests. Beneath the arguments Pro and Con lie passionate prejudices and the eternal feud between the High-Brow and the Low-Brow. I cannot follow the economic arguments and, since I am now an American citizen, I can take no part in the controversy, but, instinctively, I am Pro. I know Europe at first hand, and as a writer I cannot conceive of my life without the influence of its literature, music, and art. The Dominions, on the other hand, are for me *tiefste Provinz*, places which have produced no art and are inhabited by the kind of person with whom I have least in common.

For the Low-Brows—I am thinking of the Low-Brows of my generation and older, for the development of cheap mass travel since the war must have changed the young—for them, the Dominions are inhabited by their relatives and people like themselves, speaking English, eating English food, wearing English clothes and playing English games, whereas "abroad" is inhabited by immoral strangers —a French novel is synonymous with pornography —and, aside from the mountain-climbers and the winter-sportsmen, an Englishman who goes there often, still worse, decides to live there, is probably up to no good. The Low-Brow, however, draws distinctions between the "abroad" countries. If the Common Market countries were to consist simply of Scandinavia, he would be far less hostile to Britain's entry. I have the suspicion that the English man-in-the-street still nourishes, though probably unconsciously, strong anti-popery feelings. He may not admit it but, in his heart of hearts, he thinks that Roman Catholics are idolators, immoral, and physically dirty, that only a Protestant can really be respectable.

BRITAIN MAY JOIN the Common Market,—and, personally, I hope very much that she does—but that will not make her part of Europe, because Europe no longer exists. The automobile, the aeroplane, television, Espresso bars, etc., are creating a way of life which is the same from San Francisco to Vienna, and if, in due time, the countries behind the Iron Curtain become affluent—and I can see no intrinsic reason why they should not—then, whatever the theoretical political differences between us, life on their side will become indistinguishable from life on ours.

The same unification is taking place in High-Brow culture. There are no more distinctive cultural centres. What is Paris? The place where Hegel is taken seriously. What Vienna? The Karajan city where Wagner is played in complete darkness. To-day, every intellectual is at once more isolated and more internationalised than his predecessors. One may not like this much—I don't think I do: I find the age ill-bred and horribly noisy, but, then, I am a middle-class old fogey and an intellectual snob. As a poet, I comfort myself with the thought that, so long as different peoples speak different languages, there cannot be such a thing in Poetry as an International Style. So long as the Germans speak German and I speak English, a genuine dialogue between us is possible; we shall not simply be addressing our mirror images. Let us praise *den lieben Gott*, and thank Him for the Tower of Babel.

Graham Greene:

AS A MATERIALIST two points interest me in the Common Market and incline me in its favour.

1. Dollar and sterling used to be the two great international exchanges of the world, and of recent years the dollar area has had far more power than the sterling area. If joining the Common Market means that the pound will be supported by the gold reserves of the Six the City of London has again a chance to recover its old position. I have no idea whether this is the case or not.

2. The Six are all proceeding rapidly towards greater industrialisation. France can barely feed herself, West Germany is not in a position to feed herself, and after an initial period of difficulty it seems to me likely that there will be a great market in the industrialised Europe for the food products of the Commonwealth.

3. The political federalisation of Europe is unlikely to arrive in a middle-aged man's lifetime, so that the dream of the third power (entertained by the United States in the Far East when it suited them) is unlikely to be a practical issue. But it does seem to me that an economic third power, free to make economic arrangements not only with the under-developed countries but with the countries of Eastern Europe free from American pressure, is highly to be desired.

Ernest Gellner:

WHEN THE REQUEST FOR MY VIEWS on the Common Market reached me I was just reading Gibbon. It so happens that Edward Gibbon has bequeathed us very clear and deeply argued views on these matters. As his arguments may otherwise remain unnoticed, and in any case are of greater interest than mine, I shall use this space to restate them—with some comments.

Gibbon's interest in the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire was not just theoretical: he wanted to know whether the disaster might happen again, whether Europe, that "one great republic," as a philosopher may be permitted to view it, "whose various inhabitants have attained almost the same level of politeness and cultivation" might be overwhelmed again. Gibbon, nervous lest the Roman fate should also befall *this great republic*, hoped that his work might be of some assistance in averting it: "This awful revolution (*i.e.* the fall of the Roman Empire) may be usefully applied to the instruction of the present age." He rather anxiously surveyed the geo-political scene as he knew it, and reassured himself that it could not happen again—

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though still without exorcising a certain perceptible nervousness from his argument.

Amongst the reasons why it should not Happen Again, one is of particular interest and relevance: the European republic had in his view (and has) this advantage over the Romans, that it possessed a plurality of political heads, "divided into twelve . . . kingdoms, three . . . commonwealths, and a variety of smaller . . . states." This, he held, minimises the risk of political folly: "the chances of royal and ministerial talent are multiplied . . . with the number of . . . rulers; . . . a Julian may reign in the North, while Arcadius and Honorius again slumber in the South. . . ."

This passage, which goes on to praise the beneficent consequences of political and military competition within Europe, can leave little doubt in anyone's mind but that Gibbon, were he now alive, would join those who oppose the Common Market. He would do so for fear that it must lead to some measure of political union—but his opposition to that would be motivated by *affection*, not dislike, for Europe.

But at the same time, he would have been warmly in favour of NATO and the Atlantic alliance. He hoped that if the Barbarians should turn up again, that "the numerous armies of Germany, the gallant nobles of France, the intrepid freemen of Britain . . . might confederate for their common defence." (To confuse immediate analogies, one must add that he also added "the robust peasants of Russia," to the above list.) But should the barbarian prevail nevertheless, the West could, by "ten thousand vessels," fall back to the final redoubt of "civilised society," beyond the Atlantic. . . . The sentiments are clear. Europe should remain divided for the sake of *political* pluralism and competition which assist freedom and moderation, and the states should confederate for external defence only, with the Atlantic as the final line of defence. (Hence, one may suppose that he would have been hostile to the toleration of trans-Atlantic bridge-heads.)

Gibbon's attempt at reassurance contains one argument, fallacious in a most interesting way. In modern times (his own and ours), the technological superiority of the civilised world over the barbarian is such that the barbarian can only become a military danger if he too becomes civilised—and then, Gibbon thought, his victory ceases to be morally dangerous, for then he too "must deserve a place among the polished nations. . . ."

He thought that the acquisition by "barbarians" of technological power was a relatively easy matter, *and* that it would automatically be accompanied by social changes, which would assimilate the society in question to that West whose skill was being emulated. He supposes that 18th-century Russia had already passed this hump *and* that the changes were pervasive: "Russia now assumed the form of a powerful and civilised empire." In other words, he did not foresee how very painful the overcoming of the hump of backwardness would be: still less did he foresee that it would, in the principal instances, be accompanied by an ideology which, whilst fortifying the arduous transition, at the same time tends to turn those who undergo it under its auspices into enemies of the West, and radically differentiated from it. Thus our decline and fall, if it comes, will be different from the previous instances. It seems that even the best historians, like generals preparing for last wars, forewarn us only of the form of earlier falls.

To return to the subject: as for myself, I am *for* going into the Common Market.

Randolph Churchill:

I HAVE LONG BEEN IN FAVOUR of Britain joining the Common Market and playing an honourable role in fashioning an United Europe. My reasons are political rather than economic.

I was brought up to believe in the balance of power and that it was our supreme interest to make sure that no one power could dominate the Continent of Europe.

The tactics to support this grand strategical conception involved our being the friend or ally of the second strongest power on the Continent whoever that might be, and gathering to our side such smaller nations as wished to have their security and independence underpinned by Britain. In pursuit of this policy we have five times in four centuries gone to war. The flash point has nearly always arisen in the Low Countries from which special dangers would threaten Britain. Under Queen Elizabeth I we broke the power of Spain. Under Queen Anne and Marlborough that of Louis XIV; under the younger Pitt, Nelson, and Wellington that of Napoleon; and in the present century that of Kaiser William and of Adolf Hitler. In all history there does not exist a record of a foreign policy so consistently and successfully pursued.

Today the balance of power involves other considerations to which persons of intelligence address their minds without being the slaves of the past. We must plan for the present and for the future. The Empire has dissolved into a progressively meaningless Commonwealth. The Royal Navy is no longer, as it was in the nineteenth century, stronger than all the other navies in the world put together. There is air power and the potentialities of thermo-nuclear war. Russia and the United States have emerged as world powers entirely eclipsing in magnitude our own country and Commonwealth. We can only exercise an effective influence on world affairs if we unite with Europe.

If there is to be a United Europe we should be in it and of it: we do not want a Europe united against us. That would be to betray, if not Mr. Gaitskell's rosy millenium, at any rate four hundred years of British history.

It would be absurd for me to claim that I understand the economic arguments involved. But I notice that most of the people whose judgment I respect and who are qualified to judge believe that we should gain by going in and would suffer by staying out. By contrast all the people who oppose our entry have been wrong on nearly every political and economic issue in our lifetime. If we go in we had better go in quickly and with enthusiasm. This, I think, is what Mr. Macmillan is trying to do. That is why I support him and his gifted colleagues.

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Sir Herbert Read:

THE NAME GIVEN to this policy clearly indicates that its motive is commercial. But even at this level the experts (as usual) disagree, and if one is not an expert in economics one can only conclude that there is much to be said on both sides: a fifty-fifty speculation, as Mr. Gaitskell calls it.

The comparatively unrecognised or unadmitted aspect of the proposal is not economic and not even, in the strict sense of the word, political. Sovereignty, in the political sense, may or may not be an important factor in the modern world; as conceived by conservative politicians and imperialists, the less there is of it the better. It is as obsolete as that other doctrine of divine right, monarchy. But there is a value that is threatened by the Common Market which I would call national or regional *identity* and it is a value of incalculable importance from a cultural point of view. Art is rooted in the soil, in social intimacy, in particularities of every kind. From this point of view, the point of view of the artist (which is not the point of view of the purveyor of mass culture) we have every reason to distrust vast aggregations, the disappearance of frontiers, the merging of nationalities, all concentrations of material and political power.

These are fears and anxieties, not arguments. Art is already in a certain sense "common" or international; but so it was in the Middle Ages. The individual artist makes his contribution to an evolving style, and the style is of the period and is communal. But what the artist contributes (if it has any value) is always individual, a talent incubated in warmth and stillness.

The advocates of the Common Market ignore such cultural or spiritual values. I do not deny their idealism (the ideal of One World) but I suspect that the only people who would gain anything are the moneylenders.

Sir Kenneth Clark:

OF THE ECONOMIC ADVANTAGES of European unity I am not competent to speak: to a layman the arguments in favour seem to be wholly convincing. But I might write a word on what can only be called the cultural side. The belief that art must be national, must grow out of the folk, etc., was first put forward less than two hundred years ago by the German romantics. It contains a grain of truth, but only a grain. Whereas the opposite point of view, that the greatest periods of European art have been international, is incontrovertible.

Romanesque, early Gothic, 15th-century naturalism, Baroque, Rococo, and Classicism were all international styles. When English art was international in the 12th and 13th centuries, it produced masterpieces. When it became national, in the 15th century, it became feeble and provincial. All this was true even at a time when travel was difficult, and photographs did not exist. In an age when works of art of all countries are sent to international exhibitions and books on art all more widely circulated than ever before, an innocent authentic local culture is impossible. All that the Artist can do is to master the international language and, if he speaks it involuntarily with his own native accent—Australian, Mexican, or whatever—that may add to his charm. But if he tries to trade on his accent he becomes a provincial nuisance.

So let England become part of Europe as she was in the Middle Ages, and see if we can produce works of art equal to the Winchester Bible.

Lindley Fraser:

I WANT Great Britain to go into Europe—as soon as possible and as completely as possible. My reasons are not primarily economic—though I believe that on balance the move would benefit us in strictly economic terms. They are political, and still more psychological.

It is absurd for anti-Europeans to argue that Britain once a member of a European Confederation would be the prisoner of social and foreign policies originating in France and Germany. The contrary is more likely, if anything. Britain would be the most influential single member of the community, and in any conflicts over matters of major policy I would expect the British views to be backed by several of the other members (particularly if Britain's membership is followed by that of some of the EFTA countries). France and Dr. Adenauer know this and dislike it. Germany, apart from Adenauer, knows this and on the whole welcomes it as, I believe, do Benelux and Italy.

In particular, Britain's membership would decisively prevent the Community from becoming too inward-looking and exclusive—a development which if Britain stays out (or is not admitted) is likely to damage not merely Britain but the Western world as a whole and ultimately also the Community itself.

But I want to lay my main stress on the psychological effects of our joining. All countries, I suspect, benefit from having an occasional major shake-up in their institutions and the lives and attitudes of their citizens. Otherwise they stagnate and become hidebound, resisting change just because it is change and without regard to its desirability.

The same thing is true of individuals, of course. I am not alone in having found in my past life that the times when I have been happiest and most energetic have been just after having taken a big plunge or having passed through an experience of acute physical danger—a highly unpleasant medicine at the time but stimulating to my whole system.

Now, looking back at the history of this country over the last hundred years or more, I note several big national shake-ups of the kind I have in mind. But since the passing of the Corn Laws all of them have been the result of wars, so that the undoubted benefits of the shake-up have been far more than outweighed by the price paid for it. Joining the European Community would give us the shake-up at infinitely less expense.

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Already the mere prospect has been stimulating in all sorts of directions—increasing the demand for foreign language lessons, getting us started on replacing Fahrenheit by Celsius (Centigrade), bringing nearer the adoption of a decimal currency and the metric system of weights and measures and the construction of a Channel tunnel (or bridge). Possibly we shall even before very long follow the example of Sweden and switch over to driving on the right.

In these and many other ways the change will be a fatal shock to our insularity, and I welcome this enthusiastically.

Sir Bernard Lovell:

I DO NOT feel capable of taking part in your symposium for the simple reason that, in spite of repeated attempts, I really do not understand the implications. I am sure this is very dim of me but having struggled with the "plain man's guide" to the business I begin to wonder if anyone understands it. Clearly this is not a suitable basis from which to comment in print, so perhaps you will forgive me—maybe the symposium will enlighten me.

Kenneth Tynan:

ECONOMICALLY, I can see a strong case for entry; politically, a strong case against; and since my criterion of a country's health is not its productivity but its politics, the latter argument for me outweighs the former. Moreover, I am opposed to anything that increases exclusivity—power blocs, economic blocs, ideological blocs, etc. If I thought the Common Market was a genuine move towards internationalism I'd be for it; but it seems in part to be a rigidly fortified anti-eastern alliance, and to that extent I tend to resist it. Anyway, it is old-fashioned—redolent even of the eighteenth century and the Grand Tour—to think in terms of mere continents ("our ancestral ties with Europe," etc.); the modern, forward-looking approach is to think of internationalism on a global scale. The real trouble with the Common Market is that, as a concept, it is small-minded.

Norman Macrae

POLITICALLY, A BRITAIN OUTSIDE what will almost inevitably become the US–EEC axis would soon be only a very junior partner in its influence upon the free world's (and upon its own continent's) affairs. That would seem to me a pity, and not merely on narrow nationalistic grounds.

Economically, unless there is some extraordinary counter-revolution in the whole trend of world technology, it seems to me certain that it must be to Britain's advantage to go in. The only way a mature economy can grow is by constantly thrusting forward into the newest industries and technologies. If one is the front runner in the race, like the United States, that is very awkward because one then has to invent or to pioneer the newest technologies by one's own research. The biggest

I SUPPORT *Britain's entry into the Common Market, but it is child's play for a well-informed opponent to reduce me to stuttering silence. I have* not *worked out the full economic implications and I am frankly alarmed at some of the military implications of our entry. My attitude is based on a conviction—which twenty years as a historian may have gone to mature—that Britain is as inescapably a part of the European family as, for example, Venice is inescapably a part of the Italian family. Any lover of Venice will know how much the Serene Republic lost through merging her sovereignty with that of the mainland—and how much of her individuality is indestructible in spite of the loss of her political sovereignty. But there came a time when her political sovereignty was simply anachronistic, but emphasised her impotence. Britain outside Europe would be a sterile, suety, ill-tempered and negative province without a metropolis. Repeatedly we have tried to pretend that the affairs of the mainland are no concern of ours, and invariably the attempt has failed—failed, usually, as disastrously for the Europeans, and for our friends from the Dominions who have come back to help extricate us, as it has for ourselves. Militarily we have now accepted the inevitable: our frontier is not simply the Rhine, but on the Elbe. That we will bring to Europe a different type of experience and outlook from any of the mainland powers; that the good fortune of history and geography has given us a world-outlook and close links with other races which we intend to preserve (though are they any closer than those of the French with their former African protégés?); these seem reasons rather for going into Europe than for keeping out. Certainly I look forward to the final amalgam with very mixed feelings. The conflicts with the French, determined to dominate and not quite oblivious of old scores, and with the Germans, stubbornly yearning for their lost lands, are going to be incessant: but they cannot be avoided by staying out. And in the context of the world to-day these are family rows—no worse, if no better, than the internecine conflicts which make the Americans the hardest people in the world to govern. With the French and the Dutch, the Germans and the Italians, we have at least as much in common as have the New Englanders with the slave-states of the deep South. The Americans can make a go of it—more or less. So can we.*

Michael Howard

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advantages for growth have recently lain with the second-running countries, like the European countries (and Japan); with initially lower cost levels than the U.S., they have been able to adopt some of its pioneered technologies (sometimes with sensible improvements) after they have seen whether they really look like working. But Britain has suffered from two disadvantages in this race. First, the area with which we have had preferential trading arrangements, namely, the Commonwealth, has on the whole been a customer for slightly older sorts of export goods rather than for the newest ones. So Britain has constantly held down the expansion growth of its new growth industries in order to stop resources being pulled out of its older (and traditional export) industries; then, because all the Commonwealth countries are in some degree developing countries, and because developing countries nearly always industrialise first on the basis of making goods prominent in their own import bill, we have suddenly seen import barriers set up in the increasingly protectionist Commonwealth against precisely these traditional British export industries.

Secondly, the scale of operation needed for *new* industries is constantly rising. Just as no country can generally run an economic motor manufacturing industry unless it has an internal market of perhaps 20 million people or perhaps about £15,000 million in annual national income, there is pretty clear evidence that businessmen are now held back from plunging into even newer technologies than the motor car unless they can look to an open market (*i.e.* a market that they can feel sure will not be closed to them just after their investment has developed) of something bigger than Britain's 50 million people and £25,000 million annual income.

I don't see how anybody who has watched the non-development of British industry in recent years can doubt that Britain has suffered a double disadvantage from these two factors; we have not only been failing to develop the new industries as quickly as we ought to do, but we have also been depriving ourselves of the new technologies which would strengthen our existing industries.

Economists who argue against joining the common market have usually rested their case on the complaint that a Britain-inside-Europe would have to drop its hitherto admirable system of importing cheap (and sometimes subsidised) food from all over the world. I am all in favour of the cheap food policy, although whether even a Britain-outside-Europe could have continued with that policy to the full present extent is doubtful (probably we couldn't do so, because of the approach of world food cartels and the inconvenient growth of production by our own relatively inefficient farmers). But even discounting this fear, nobody has been able to convince me that the once-for-all loss on our agricultural terms of trade through joining Europe could conceivably amount to much more than 2 or 3 per cent. of present national income (if to that). To say that the industrial advantages of joining Europe, garnered over the whole span of future years, are not likely even to make up for this tiny once-for-all loss seems to me to be nonsense.

Sir Hugh Casson:

I HAVE LONG DREADED being forced to answer this question. It is impossible to claim ignorance, for no issue has been more widely explained or debated at every level of intelligence. It is shameful but, alas, only honest to admit disinterest to the point of a mental shut-down, but pusillanimous to remain dumb. Of all the comments I have read or heard, I am attracted only by three: (*1*) A senior member of the Government (as reported): "It all boils down in the end to the question, do you or don't you trust and like foreigners, and most people in most countries don't." (2) A teenager: "What I say is if we don't go in we'll be left out, won't we?" (*3*) Mr. Wesker (as reported): "On the whole the more barriers of *any* kind that come down the better, provided of course new ones don't go up." In this absurd amalgam of national prejudice, brutal sense, and woolly wistfulness, cod-eyed and mouth ajar, I aimlessly cruise.

Kathleen Nott:

IN INVITING ONE'S VIEWS on the question of Britain's entry into Europe, the editors, I am glad to see, not only allow that this issue raises passions but even suggest that passion might be respectable. I find that I dislike the prospect with an intensity surprising even to myself: and with what I call passion, as distinct from emotion: something very different from the anger or fear with which one may react to the nuclear threat, and much more like instinctive repugnance. After this come the reasons —or rationalisations. One of them is that, though I don't feel sure what, if anything, the Commonwealth means to us nowadays, I don't want anything to undermine India's strength, because I believe that on the whole she is a force for peace. Another is that, from what Sir Henry Slessor said in a broadcast, it seems that if we enter the Common Market, we shall have to bring our legal system to some considerable extent into line with Europe's. This shocks me because in matters of law and justice we have some good, even some ***better***, habits. And one of our good general habits is a preference for the concrete over the abstract. This means, among other things, that compared to many other peoples, we like to follow our noses rather than just kow-tow to "experts." I may say that so far no "expert" has convinced me that we are likely to be better off, even economically, for the change. Obviously it is all a matter of politics and the Cold War. And I most certainly don't want to be pushed around by those two mysterious old Immortals, de Gaulle and Adenauer, who anyway do not seem to me to be the natural heirs of Europe but rather to have been secretly wished on us by some Martian computer more advanced than anything we know; and also lately to have revealed a mysterious affinity which offends against some cultural Law of Species.

I believe that this is a case for a Referendum,

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simply to give people a chance to indicate which way their feelings are really leading them. I bet we should have a surprisingly large vote *against*. But the most significant force of a Referendum would be psychological. Most of us are by now so full of the sense of determinism and *force majeure*, the belief that events are always too large for us, that we feel we have to look as though we like them when we don't. "Reason," said Hume, that most reasonable, humane and British of philosophers, "is and ought to be the slave of the passions." In other words, our instinctive likes and dislikes are not *necessarily* wrong.

Finally, in certain important realities, we are, and always have been, a natural part of Europe. The European Community strikes me as an artificial and abstract conception.

My hope that Britain will come in is based on three main lines of argument. I think Britain can give an expanded Common Market area a balance and stability which it would otherwise lack. I think that Britain's industrial power and prosperity depends on coming into the Common Market. And I think that Canada and Australia stand to gain more even than the British Isles by this happening. The economies of both of these dominions have been virtually marking time for years past; both can benefit tremendously from an influx of European capital and population. There is not the slightest danger of their losing their essentially British character in the process.

It is purely absurd that emotionalism, much of it either obviously bogus or highly suspect, has already played such a large part in discussions about Britain's role in Europe. The Beaverbrook Press's formula of "Either Commonwealth or Europe" is misleading. The Labour Party's pretence of championing Commonwealth ideals is dishonest, and sharp tactics. The groans of "why should we have anything to do with Europeans" are deplorable; they happen to be our friends and allies. Britain's role in Europe will not be an easy one. But that is no reason for staying out.

Terence Prittie:

IT IS NOT EASY to have a rounded, or even a definite view of Britain's relationship with Europe at the moment. My own is coloured by both doubts and hopes. On the whole, hope predominates; I believe that Britain must and will come into the Common Market and whatever European political community is organised.

First, my doubts about Britain coming in. The principal one is that I do not believe that the Europe of the Six has basic political stability. Communism is still strong in Italy. The West Germans have depended far too much during the last thirteen years on Dr. Adenauer and will, when he goes next year, become increasingly hag-ridden by inevitable strains and stresses—the Berlin problem, the continuing division of their country, the muted cries for help from Eastern Germany. The France of de Gaulle is moving away from democracy of the standard Western pattern, and it seems to me that de Gaulle is carrying out a carefully planned campaign to undermine French democratic institutions. De Gaulle's autocracy is more worrying to me than Adenauer's paternalism.

In the second place: I am disturbed by France's dominance of the Six. For I am afraid that France wants to build up the Common Market area as a closed shop, and not as the kernel of an expansive, liberal-trading association (which is what I would want it to be). This is a fear which I have analysed to myself and it is not coloured by minor vexations which France causes me—by her use of diplomatic blackmail in the council chamber, by the rabid materialism of her citizens, by the bad manners which are the product of material success. Finally, I am profoundly alarmed by what I believe is the key-note of de Gaulle's world-policy—to create a Europe which will emancipate itself from the United States. I think this is why de Gaulle would prefer to keep Britain out of Europe. It is an important reason why Britain should come in.

"IF BRITAIN ENTERS EUROPE" *was a recent newspaper headline. British insularity still prevents most of this country's inhabitants from seeing that it has always been geographically, historically, and in other ways part of Europe and cannot therefore "enter" it.*

I am not competent to weigh the pros and cons of the Common Market, but as the self-preservation of the human race now depends, for the first time in history, solely upon international agreement, then the more international agreement the better. Any move seems desirable which tends to facilitate the urgently necessary but difficult process of making blockheads understand that all human beings (other blockheads and "Europeans" included) are, whether they like it or not, members of one another.

So far as democracies appear both workable and desirable, they seem so because their strength comes from a willing unity of varieties. Human behaviour in this island has some good habits or tendencies which are demonstrably valuable. It would therefore be a pity if they were to be weakened by the growth of less insular habits of mind. British virtues have done and could still do a lot of good in the world, but if Britain grows less insular, it would be pleasing to see a lessening of British smugness, ignorance, xenophobia, and want of imagination. These attributes are not aids to survival.

William Plomer

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Mark Abrams:

I WOULD AGREE that the odds are no more than fifty-fifty that membership of the European Common Market would raise significantly the rate of growth of the British economy; but given our relative performance over the past ten years that seems a worthwhile gamble. It appears all the more attractive when one remembers that a fair bit of the economic growth we have achieved has been made possible by the post-war investment of foreign capital in this country, and that if we stay out this source of expansion would very probably dry up.

On the political front I don't imagine there is going to be a unified West European Federation in anything like the near future, but in moving towards it I can see the probability of two substantial gains in the field of party politics: Common Market right-wing parties might well learn from the British Conservative Party how to become social liberals and how to maintain their strength without depending on feudalistic secular and clerical forces; and the British Labour Party might well produce an attractive amalgam of its present concern with moral values and the Continental Social Democrats' growing readiness to shape policy in the light of contemporary facts.

Finally, one should not underestimate the potential social gains for Britain. In Britain the ignorance of the average person about the social structures and cultural activities of the West European peoples is colossal. If we are brought into much closer economic and political contact with them some of this sterile insularity would probably disappear.

In short, the case for going in doesn't rest on technical arguments about the best way to subsidise farmers (or the best sites for Western missile bases), but on the intangibles of the climate of British economic, political, and social life. In all three areas we have little to lose and could gain a great deal.

Mervyn Stockwood:

I FIND IT DIFFICULT to jump off the fence because I have not the technical competence to assess the merits of the argument. I listen to Mr. Gaitskell and am impressed by his doubts and then I listen to Mr. Macmillan and am encouraged by his beliefs. But if I were compelled to make up my mind I should probably decide in favour of the Common Market for two reasons.

(1) On the questionable assumption that the world will avoid an atomic explosion, we shall be faced with the problem of raising the standard of living in the poorer countries. This means that the less industrialised countries will have to produce raw materials and simple goods while countries like Britain concentrate on manufacturing complex equipment and exporting capital for development.

If this is to happen we cannot think in narrow terms, but fit into a larger pattern. For a start this means an European nucleus. If we can fit the Commonwealth countries into the scheme, so much the better.

(2) What will happen to the Common Market if Britain doesn't join? The Six will continue but, instead of becoming a powerful instrument for raising world living standards, it may degenerate into a tough little Franco-German confederacy making rude noises at Russia and ignoring the backward parts of the world.

I realise that hundreds of factors will have to be taken into consideration before our government is able to agree to terms. In particular we must safeguard the conditions of the workers and our relationships with those countries with which there are existing agreements. But sooner or later there must be the leap of faith. Whether or not we make such a leap depends upon our assessment of the inevitable tension between the economic security of Britain and the gradual development of a world community.

George Mikes:

PERHAPS I WAS NOT terribly surprised at the spectacle of a Tory Prime Minister on the side of Europe, progress, internationalism, and in favour of giving up some of Britain's national sovereignty, opposed by a reactionary Socialist, suspicious of Europe, appealing to nationalist emotions and historical traditions. But I was certainly deeply shocked to find myself on the side of the reactionary Socialist.

Why am I not too eager to see Britain join the Common Market?—I asked myself sternly. The economic argument is beyond me but I have learnt from a number of most qualified economist friends that it is neither here nor there: advantages may cancel disadvantages, and *vice versa*. Consequently, my reasons (and almost everybody else's) are psychological, supported by neatly thought-out, seemingly rational, *a posteriori* arguments.

On reflection I find that I have two main reasons for my opposition, one emotional and silly, the other—well-thought-out and reasonable—the silly-emotional reason being probably the more important.

A European myself, I should have been ashamed to admit even to myself that I regarded the British as a superior nation. I fought against this notion; I ridiculed it; to-day I reject it fiercely. Yet, I view myself with suspicion. Deep inside me I must have felt that by becoming British, having been a European, I had made a higher grade. I have devoted more than two decades of my life to becoming a genuine Briton—and now the whole country is going European. I once wrote a little treatise called *How to be an Alien*; I always expected it to be taken seriously, but not quite as seriously as this. I never foresaw the possibility that the United Kingdom would study it, learn the rules, and turn alien lock, stock, and barrel.

Secondly: I do not trust Europeans. For me Britain is first of all the country where personal

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liberties are deep-rooted and sacrosanct and if I have learnt one lesson in my life (alas, I have not learnt many) it is that personal rights, secured and respected, count for more than anything else. I do not want to disparage European democracy—personal rights are as safe in Holland as they are here; nor does there seem to be at the moment anything basically wrong with any EEC democracy. But there was Nazism in Germany and Fascism in Italy only the day before yesterday; and practically yesterday we saw France threatened by an Algerian *putsch*, fascism, or chaos. I don't care how the price of butter fluctuates in the next decade; I don't care whether we sell more Humber Hawks in Italy than the Italians sell Alfa Romeos in this country; I don't care whether I shall be able to afford the rent of my present flat for long: my family and I can always move to digs or to the Embankment. But I dread the day when a Common Market parliament makes an attempt to curb the right of the *Daily Express* to be as silly about the Common Market as it pleases.

Frank Kermode:

IT WAS IN THE SUMMER of 1961, lying on the ocean beach at Wellfleet (Mass.), that I found out—a year or so before the Prime Minister made it public—the truth about our need to enter the Market. "Certainly you're going in," said my hosts. "What else? Why not?" I mumbled about the Commonwealth, about New Zealand. I said there was nothing sentimental about one's obligation to a country which had shaped itself, culturally and economically, on the assumption, too obvious to need formulation, that there existed an inviolable bond. "How many people are there in New Zealand?" asked an oiled, elegant girl. "Three *million*, for God's sake?" They were nice; but they found it hard to be patient, because I couldn't see what was to them beyond argument, that the British were hesitating, mumbling, prevaricating; failing to see that the one way of stopping their decline and preventing their isolation was Europe. If they let a few million New Zealanders keep them out, the real reason would be that they were pathetically unaware of their plight. In my experience most Americans see it like this.

What has happened now is that many Englishmen, including the Prime Minister, have begun to see it in much the same way. I think this is wrong. Let me be clear that I am not impressed by the Gaitskellite "thousand years of history" talk; it is vague, unhistorical, millennial. It suggests that if we go in the wounded beast will be turned loose again. On the other hand I am even more puzzled by the new Tory line that great beneficent forces are propelling us in, indeed, I think I like it even less. Without any substantial encouragement from the Six, it is now being proclaimed that staying out is cowardly and retrogressive, and that going forward means going in. Since no one has made the least attempt to explain why this should

I BELIEVE *that on economic grounds Britain should enter the Common Market, but that there are even stronger reasons why she should do so.*

1. *The European Economic Community is intended to be the first stage in a transition to a political union, with a view to eliminating the national enmities and rivalries, particularly between France and Germany, which have been the curse of Europe. These are wholly admirable objectives, and Britain should play her part in helping to achieve them. She cannot do so if she is excluded from the E.E.C., which the Six, rightly, regard as a prerequisite to political union.*

2. *Entry into the Market will make it possible for Britain, in association with the Six, to discharge the immense responsibilities which she, like every other advanced industrial country, has towards the underdeveloped peoples of the world. She cannot do this alone, nor can the Commonwealth aid her to, but the Community of Europe, including Britain, commands the economic, scientific, and technological resources which are adequate to the task. The Commonwealth is not an alternative to the Community, nor the Community to the Commonwealth; they are complementary and each has different functions to perform in the world.*

3. *Entry into the Market will restrict Britain's national sovereignty. This is not a reason against it. Unrestricted national sovereignty, even when British-made, has not been a blessing to the world; in any case, it is to-day very largely a myth, which is capable of breeding dangerous illusions, particularly in Britain.*

I am less enamoured of sovereignty than, say, Mr. Gaitskell or Lord Beaverbrook, because as a Welshman I belong to a people who long ago lost their national independence, though not their national identity, with effects which have been of benefit both to Wales and to Britain. I believe that similar benefits would follow both for Britain and for Europe from a British surrender of sovereignty to the Community of Europe.

4. *One of these benefits would be that Britain's entry into the Market would help to strengthen and to restore the unity of the European working-class movement. This is in itself desirable. But, together with Britain's own influence, it would also have the effect of restraining some of the dangerous tendencies which may develop in a Europe from which Britain is excluded.*

5. *Most of the things I value have been created by a Europe of which Britain has always been an integral part. Her exclusion from a Europe which after centuries is trying to achieve unity could only lead to spiritual and cultural impoverishment both for Britain and for Europe.*

Goronwy Rees

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be true, I conclude that those who talk in this way have accepted the American view, and really believe that we are so far gone in our decline that the Market is the only hope of checking it.

This is a myth with the kind of correspondence to fact that successful myths have to have. There is no doubt that the past decade, characterised by shameful government and paltry opposition, has damaged us alike in reputation and in fact. It is a reasonable inference that without radical change we shall continue to suffer. What cannot be true is the contention that the case for entry has suddenly become self-evident, that our ills are otherwise irreversible. The Prime Minister now tells us that sitting on the fence is a ludicrous evasion; he doesn't say we *must* get in, but he seems to mean that. I daresay his feelings about New Zealand are fairly similar to those held on Cape Cod. And since he has presided for six years over our growing ignominy, his opinion that he thinks we're done for carries some weight. Naturally he will not allow that the remedy is simpler, more domestic.

Going into Europe has obvious attractions for the literary man. I feel them; but I also feel that the whole issue remains very obscure. In spite of the orgy of self-congratulation at Llandudno and Brighton, all parties debated this issue at a very low level. The large cultural and historical issues received no serious attention. This is a great subject, calling in vain for its Burke. As matters stand, refusing as I do to accept the Tory assumption that this is the only way out, I find myself on that fence—and without shame, for it seems to me to be, even at this late stage, the only honourable place to be.

Arthur Koestler:

YELLOWED WITH AGE among dusty files, there is an article I wrote more than twelve years ago (in October, 1950, to be precise), for the *New York Times*.

"In 1940," it says, "after the fall of Paris, Winston Churchill proposed the unification of the French and British Empires by a simple stroke of the pen. When the danger was past, the lesson was forgotten. In 1948, after Stalin's seizure of Czechoslovakia, Ernest Bevin declared that Europe must unite or perish. Since then, he and his colleagues have acted as if they had chosen the second alternative. Political federation, we have been told, is premature; it must be preceded by economic integration. But when the Schumann plan of economic integration was presented, it was declared unacceptable because it would entail a sacrifice in political sovereignty. And so it goes on. . . ."

And so it goes on. However, owing to the progress of modern science, there is a third alternative in sight. Once Labour has won the Election—thanks to the inspired slogan "United We Fall, Divided We Rule," sung to the tune of the Intranational—all they will have to do is to enlist a battalion of frogmen. The frogmen will cut the moorings of these islands, and tow them to Botany Bay, or the shores of New Zealand. Thus the Commonwealth will regain that intimate, close-knit texture which it is in danger of losing owing to the hazards of geography. A last alternative would be to have us towed close to New York harbour—on condition that the United States, in appreciation of Mr. Gaitskell's reference to "a thousand years of British history," are willing to rescind the Declaration of Independence.

Andrew Shonfield:

IF THERE WERE nothing else to commend the exercise, I should still want Britain to join the European Common Market for the sake of the experience. What has impressed me increasingly during the period of nearly five years since the people in Brussels began to operate the Rome Treaty is the gradual emergence of a new way of doing business between national states. The technique is still evolving. But the crucial assumption from which it starts is clear. It is that matters which have for several hundred years been treated as the exclusive domestic concern of national governments have now become subjects in which foreigners have a right to meddle.

In order to fulfil the promise of the Rome Treaty that every citizen of the European Community will be guaranteed the same rights to jobs, livelihood, and business opportunities everywhere, regardless of his or her nationality, nations will have to take a fresh and critical look at a great many of their established laws. For the first time, they will have to legislate on a large scale in order to meet the needs of a lot of people *outside* their national borders. The Common Market implies that the old rigid distinction between the internal (private) and the external (public) policies of a nation-state is no longer accepted between the partners in this enterprise. It is already clear that the enterprise itself will only work in the long run if governments learn to bargain with one another in an effective and friendly fashion on such very domestic issues as the taxes to be introduced in their budgets, the way their social services are run, the amount that their farmers are subsidised, and even perhaps on details like the standard of university examinations that will qualify a man to do certain professional jobs anywhere in the Common Market.

Some critics dismiss all this by saying that it is merely creating another (irrelevant) nation-state, when the present necessity is to go beyond that. This is to misunderstand the experience as it actually impinges, now and for many years to come, on the policies of those nations that are involved in it. The predominant fact for them is the transcending of the familiar inhibitions and egotisms of the nation-state, and their substitution by a neighbourly loyalty which is a very long way distant from the old-style belligerent patriotism. Moreover, the first impressive rush of this new-style collaboration—which has to operate on an

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extremely wide front in order to meet the complex economic and social demands of a modern Community of States—may too easily suggest that this is the beginning of a process of rapid and total amalgamation. There is no warrant for this view. Many things will remain quite conveniently separate, after the initial bout of integration in the Common Market between now and the early 1970s. Progress in achieving a united foreign policy, for example, will depend on how fast or how slowly governments acquire the habit of agreeing on these matters. There will be a predisposition not to disagree too much—as there is already, for instance, in the Anglo-American alliance to-day—but no compulsion to uniformity.

The real change will be the habit of taking contentious issues beyond the conventional barrier which traditionally surrounds national domestic policy. It is precisely this barrier which makes the United Nations a feeble instrument for the active management of international relations. The same conclusion applies even more obviously to the Commonwealth. It becomes more clear every day that any effective peace-keeping operation will necessarily involve a great deal of interference in the domestic life of nations. To take the most obvious case—as nuclear material and know-how become increasingly commonplace, how ensure, otherwise, that no one tests these weapons or builds long-range vehicles to deliver them?

There are besides some major limitations on national sovereignty in less spectacular spheres of policy like currency and financial policy, which nations will have to learn to live with, if the Western world is to have the sort of prosperity that we have enjoyed for the past ten years. What is so exciting about the European experiment is that it provides a model of the most advanced techniques of mutual interference in defined areas of the domestic affairs of nations. That will not of itself solve the most pressing international problem. But it will help to create the habit of mind, which others, including the Soviet Union and the United States, will have to acquire, if they are to deal rationally with one another. It is as if the world has been so narrowed that the only way to avoid a collision among the crowded and volatile occupants of the confined space is by holding hands.

AFTERTHOUGHT: I have asked myself why this elementary fact about the function of the European Economic Community in international relations seems to elude a number of distinguished economists whose views I respect. It is noticeable that some of the outstanding Keynesians of the 1930s and '40s in Britain are now ranged in active hostility or armed neutrality towards the Common Market. Motives of economic self-interest are of course not the decisive factor in deciding whether or not to join the Common Market. Yet the refusal of these *avant-garde* economists of the immediate pre-war and wartime generation to contemplate the possibility that what has emerged in Europe may be a new and efficient piece of political machinery for ordering international economic affairs is slightly surprising.

May it perhaps be that their habits of thought are altogether too imbued with the realism of the 1930s and '40s? After all it was a tremendous break-through, barely a generation old, to persuade national governments to interfere extensively in the economic process in order to secure full employment and to reduce the ups and downs of business activity. That was the historic achievement of the Keynesian revolution. But what the experience of recent years has demonstrated to the post-war generation, in Britain above all, is that this revolution by itself is not enough. True, we have had full employment; but Britain's economic growth has been slowed down by external pressures which remain obstinately beyond national control. Keynes's practical prescriptions were directed towards a closed economy, and if the economy was too open to external pressures through the balance of payments—as Britain's economy certainly was in the 1920s and early 1930s—then the right answer was to put some more armour on it: in other words to reinforce its national separateness.

It is a long jump from this into the world of the 1960s, where a group of nations, all, in their

THE IDEA *of a European Common Market organised to improve the living standards of its member countries and, in so doing, producing a surplus to assist the underdeveloped countries appeals to me as it must to all enlightened people. The emotional and often contradictory terms in which the Government has urged the need for immediate entry have filled me with suspicion. If, as is so often said, France, at least, is reluctant to receive us, we must obviously be sure that we are getting the best terms we can. As a layman I have been confirmed in this view by the fact that the three members of the Labour Party whom I most respect —Gaitskell, Healey, and Jay—adhere to it.*

Indeed it is not only the propagandist Tory Voice that disturbs me; too many intellectuals who support the Common Market seem to take on a rhapsodical rhetorical note when they speak of Europe, a note more to be expected from Beaverbrook followers about the Commonwealth or fellow-travellers about the Soviet Union. Culturally I view England's increasing insularity with alarm, but there is a little-Europeanism as narrow and pretentious as any little-Englandism. If entry to the Common Market frees us from false provincialism, well and good. If it reinforces an arrogant European contempt for American or other non-European cultures, so much the worse.

The case for or against the Common Market, in fact, on cultural grounds is not so simply dualistic as its adherents and opponents have allowed themselves in the heat of battle to suggest.

Angus Wilson

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different ways, pursuing the objectives of the welfare state, try to take some of the sting out of the balance of payments by first blurring and finally abolishing the difference between their domestic and their collective economic policies. So perhaps it is not after all quite so remarkable that the original Keynesians, who compassed one revolution involving the reinforcement of the powers of the nation-state in the 1930s, should look askance at this new development which appears at first sight as if it might be surrendering the captured citadel. There is of course no way of proving conclusively at this stage that this really is a move towards economic management on a larger scale beyond the nation-state, in a style that Keynes never thought of. And it is particularly hard for British economists, after a century and a half of intellectual leadership, to contemplate the possibility that some new light on this problem may after all be coming from east of the English Channel.

Of course things will never be the same again. Remaining outside means making just as many radical changes in British economic, social and foreign policy as would be necessitated by going in. But we should be free to make them in the light of the wider needs of the world as we see them.

The Common Market as it now exists is inspired by narrow regionalism. Relevant internationalism today means accepting disarmament controls, following liberal tariff and trading policies, and working all-out through the UN to end the deadly contest between East and West and substitute a policy of co-operation based on our common interest in survival. Those are the causes that inspire the new generation.

Anthony Wedgwood Benn:

THE IDEA OF BRITAIN joining the Common Market is emotionally very attractive. To throw open our windows to new influences, to help shape the destiny of a new community, even to merge our sovereignty in a wider unit—these offer an exciting prospect. By contrast the xenophobic, parochial delusions of grandeur fostered by the Beaverbrook press appear petty, old-fashioned, and reactionary. But the issue must not be decided by either of these emotions. A political decision of this magnitude calls for a cold hard examination by each of us of what is involved. It seems to me:

First, that the Treaty of Rome which entrenches Laissez-faire as its philosophy and chooses Bureaucracy as its administrative method will stultify effective national economic planning without creating the necessary supra-national planning mechanisms for growth and social justice under democratic control.

Second, that the political inspiration of EEC amounts to a belief in the institutionalisation of NATO which will harden the division of Europe, and encourage the emergence of a new nuclear super-power, thus worsening East-West relations and making disarmament more difficult.

Third, that the trading policy which the community will inevitably pursue will damage the exports of under-developed countries and increase the speed at which the gulf between rich and poor countries is widening.

Fourth, that on balance Britain would have far less influence on world events if she were inside than she could have if she remained outside.

Fifth, that experience shows that written constitutions entrenching certain interests and principles are virtually impossible to alter.

Alastair Buchan:

MY EMOTIONAL REACTIONS to Britain's impending return to Europe are as mixed as anyone's. I was brought up in a family where the Commonwealth was taken seriously, and with many American friends and visitors. I had crossed the Atlantic four times and had gazed on the Pacific before I ever saw Paris. I served six years in a Commonwealth army, lived for five in the United States, and have a Canadian wife. Until five years ago Europe was architecture and literature and holidays and not much else. I thought I was pure *homo Atlanticus*.

My own feelings have altered rapidly, not just because of the success of the Common Market or the nuisance value of the grand old men of Europe. Britain's pretensions to be a world power, either in its Tory form ("Those fellows out East all respect the British presence"), or its left-wing form ("We have a unique moral influence, we are a Western India") seem to me equally fallacious. We are a middle power in Europe and therefore have a growing community of interest with other ordinary middle powers in Europe, especially as, for some reason I cannot fully fathom, the effect of improving global communications is to make regional associations more important. Reflection on our history in this century makes me profoundly dubious of the pretensions of a maritime strategy. The Commonwealth has, for complex reasons, virtually disappeared. I have lived long enough with the Americans to know that they can only be influenced by massive pressure. And I think the new Europe is going to evolve a better "American way of life" than the Americans have.

I find many Europeans humourless or didactic, and my Presbyterian ancestry makes me deeply suspicious of all those Papists. But I see no alternative to a very close association with Europe, and indeed look forward to it, rather as my Scots ancestors of two centuries ago decided that if they could not lick the English they might as well infiltrate them.

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BOOKS & WRITERS

Strachey's Holy Mountain

By Michael Howard

A CENTURY ago respected pundits could still, in their works about government and political organisations, ignore economics completely. The problems which confronted mankind, it then seemed, were ones primarily of sovereignty and representation, of the administration of justice and the safeguarding of minority and individual rights, of education, of the relationship of Church to State. The view that the study of economic questions might shed a new light on these matters, or even render them irrelevant, was heterodox, if no longer totally disreputable. It was not perhaps until the disasters of the 'thirties that it became evident, in Europe if not in the United States, that nothing fruitful could be written about politics which did not take full account of economic considerations as well.

To-day the specialist in military affairs is in much the same position as was the economist a hundred years ago. His field is increasingly regarded as reputable and relevant, with its authorities, its controversies, and even its textbooks. But it is still peripheral, if not eccentric, in political studies. It is more often ignored than included in major works, both academic and polemical, of social, political and economic analysis; and it is exceptional to find a political thinker of the stature and influence of John Strachey devoting, as he does here,[1] an entire volume to military problems in the course of a multi-volume study of the principles of democratic socialism. "Any such study which ignored the menace of nuclear war," he states at the outset, "would be incomplete, to say the least of it." One hopes that the irony of this understatement will not be wasted on those of Mr. Strachey's colleagues who continue blithely to dispute about the optimum organisation of society, as if unaware of the dimensions of the catastrophe which at present threatens mankind.

It is only to be expected that Mr. Strachey should appreciate more than most authorities that interdependence of political and military considerations which needs to be stressed to-day as never before. The forces which on the one hand incline politicians and their electorates to ignore military factors in the formulation of policy, and which on the other lead military specialists to develop weapons and expertise in complete isolation from political requirements, can be counteracted only by constant effort. Clausewitz seldom figures as required reading in university syllabuses on political thought; while if *Vom Kriege* is studied at all in military academies, it is hard to believe that much stress is laid on the vital Books I and VIII, whose lessons Mr. Strachey rightly rehearses here. War in the abstract, we learn from them, is absolute and unlimited, disdaining no weapon, no atrocity, no deceit, aiming only at the total destruction of the enemy. In practice it is, or should be, shaped and controlled by the requirements of the political object for which it is being fought: it is not an interpretation of policy, but its "continuation by other means."

There is a certain unresolved confusion in Clausewitz's own writings, of which he was conscious and for which he apologised in the note which he left with the unfinished manuscripts of *Vom Kriege* before his death. At times he seems to say that war is, by definition and in its essence, the continuation of policy; at others his language is exhortatory rather than definitive, urging that it *ought* to be such a continuation, and can only be made so by conscious effort. He was aware, as anyone must be who studies the problem, of the innate tendency of military affairs to assume a technical, non-political autonomy, a logic as well as a grammar of their own, and, instead of remaining subordinate to political requirements, becoming their master. The extent to which this occurred in Europe before 1914 is notorious; as is the part played by Clausewitz's self-styled

[1] John Strachey. *On the Prevention of War*. Macmillan, 40*s*.

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disciple but total betrayer, the Count von Schlieffen: whose rigorous military logic left Germany no alternative but to precipitate, over a political matter in which she had only a secondary concern, a war on a scale out of all proportion to the interests involved.

The degree to which this military independence of politics has grown during the past fifteen years is even more alarming. The weapons-systems and the strategic postures of the West, and perhaps of the Communist world as well, have been developed, not so much to meet precisely-assessed political needs, but according to a logic in which technical feasibility ("it was so sweet, we had to have it," as Robert Oppenheimer confessed about the decision to make the hydrogen bomb), economic pressures, and inter-service rivalries have played a determining part. The result has been the erection of systems of mass-destruction not only disproportionate but quite horrifyingly irrelevant to the actual political requirements of the powers which possess them.

THE GREAT MERIT of Mr. Strachey's book is that it once again marries together political and military considerations, like a stereoscope showing a three-dimensional whole, in a way which has not been adequately done since Henry Kissinger's *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy*. As has been observed more than once on this side of the Atlantic, too many of the major American studies on nuclear war which have appeared during the last five years have been of two kinds. Either they have ignored the political factor completely, constructing elaborate and ingenious "models" of pre-emptive and retaliatory strategies, counterforce, counter-city, and counter-value strikes, with a beautifully coherent inner logic and of considerable value as an intellectual discipline, but quite remote from the confused world of political reality in which they must in practice operate. Or else they have remade the world in the strategist's image, in two monolithic blocs whose deadly and irreconcilable enmity is self-evident from the political texts and manifestos of the Communist Party, and in which the simple issues of democratic freedom and communist slavery are commensurate in their absoluteness with the weapons with which they are to be "defended." Unfortunately it is very much easier to create—and sell—this sort of *simpliste* world image to fit one's weapons-system than it is to devise and adapt a weapons-system to a world in which the potential adversaries are driven, not by a single overriding motive but by several conflicting interests, the outcome of whose interaction cannot with certainty be predicted; where the reality of governmental and economic systems bears only a tenuous resemblance to the descriptions of the theorists; where blocs are not, and cannot be monolithic, but composed of independent powers with their own distinct interests and ambitions; and, above all, where the developing and uncommitted nations stubbornly refuse to accept the role in which the ideologues cast them, as the prizes for the victor in the Cold War, but insist on charting a possibly erratic and certainly unpredictable course of their own.

But this is the world for which governments must shape both their policies and the weapons with which they must support those policies. This political basis, and not the weapons themselves, is rightly Mr. Strachey's starting point in formulating his recommendations. He began his book in 1959, and he has to some extent been overtaken by events; for his line of reasoning has been paralleled by such influential American thinkers as Robert Bowie, Paul Nitze, Henry Kissinger, and James King, and become accepted doctrine in the White House and in sections at least of the Pentagon. Mr. Strachey has seen the proposals which he endorses, for increasing conventional forces, for multiplying hard-based and mobile-based missiles so as to be able to rely on a second-strike and not on a pre-emptive strategy, and for reducing the dependence of NATO on "tactical" nuclear weapons, all become formal United States policy, and even the British are beginning, belatedly and with the worst imaginable grace, to go some way towards implementing them. But the arguments behind these proposals have never been marshalled with greater clarity than they are here, and the debate is by no means over. The policy which Mr. Strachey and others have been urging has certainly been adopted in Washington; but the old order still survives by its side. The necessary forces for the new defence programme have simply been added to the force-requirements of the old SAC-dominated first-strike strategy, and Mr. McNamara's declarations of policy consequently resemble nothing so much as the valiant efforts of the Elizabethan bishops to reconcile the Calvinist and the Lutheran elements in the Thirty Nine Articles. The present "mix" is, in fact, as naked and illogical a compromise as was the Anglican settlement itself, and like that settlement, may easily collapse again into doctrinal civil war.

YET ALL THESE MEASURES, Mr. Strachey admits, are short-term ones; holding tactics, sterile without a long-term strategy to back them up. What is this long-term strategy to be? The orthodox answer is, that we must continue

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patiently to negotiate for multilateral disarmament with adequate measures for inspection and control. Mr. Strachey does not explicitly reject this course, but he is under no illusions about its difficulties. His account of disarmament negotiations since 1945 is fair, but gloomy in its implications. He dissociates himself from the school of thinkers who maintain that disarmament would have been possible at certain moments—1933, 1955, 1960—"if only" one side or the other had shown greater speed, or honesty, or foresight. The problem, he realises, is more profound than this. It is one, not of means, but of ends.

What is the nature of the disarmed world for which we are striving? The Russians seem to think that it will still be a world of fully sovereign states, effective masters of their own destinies. Many Western specialists, particularly in America, consider that it can only be a world in which a single central authority possesses a monopoly of armed force, which it could use against any transgressor without fear of veto. The first concept perhaps corresponds to that abiding Tolstoyan streak in the Russian character, discernible long before the Revolution, which finds it possible, in a way that the average Westerner does not, to believe in the total transformation of all existing conditions of political life by a mighty effort of the human will. The latter corresponds to the American experience of creating new types of political authority by the careful construction of written constitutions. To both, Mr. Strachey brings a typically European scepticism. While careful to emphasise his belief that there is nothing natural and inevitable about the states-system as it has developed in the world over the past five hundred years, while asserting that "for our existing world of fully sovereign states war remains inevitable but has become intolerable," he cannot accept the likelihood of this system being transformed by any revolution either *à l'Americaine* or *à la Russe*. He sees a way out by evolution rather than by revolution; and his reflections on this constitute the most original and provocative part of his book.

America and Russia (Mr. Strachey maintains) have, underlying their bitter antagonisms, a number of firm interests in common: in particular an interest in survival, and an interest in preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons. The issue on which agreement appears most probable in disarmament negotiations is the conclusion of a ban on all further testing of nuclear weapons. Such an agreement would be like a rope thrown across the chasm. More would follow. In the enforcement of this ban on third parties, America and Russia would learn to work together, develop techniques of co-operation, and slowly, in their dual management of their monopoly, lay the foundations of a genuine world authority. If no such agreement can be reached before the Russo-American monopoly has been decisively breached (which indeed it has been already) then it might yet be possible to evolve such an authority out of a Concert of Nuclear Powers, pledged not only to prevent the further spread of nuclear weapons but to take common action against whichever power among them used these weapons first.

IT IS EASY TO POINT OUT the weaknesses of such a solution—as indeed of any solution which has yet been put forward to the world's dilemma. A Russo-American diarchy of the type Mr. Strachey recommends would be an attempt to perpetuate a power-structure which is already significantly changing. Could America effectively impose her will on a United Europe—any better than she can on a Gaullist France? Could Russia assert her authority over China? And even if they could do so, is it likely that they would? Mr. Strachey himself dismisses the pacifist solution, of a surrender by the West, as "too remote a possibility to be worth talking about," but some of the possibilities implied in his solution seem little less remote. We have to visualise America making common cause with Russia against any of her allies, in Europe or elsewhere, who acquired nuclear weapons, and, *a fortiori*, used them. If Britain, in a new Kuwait intervention, were to use tactical nuclear weapons, as it seems she was prepared to do in 1958, the United States would have to swing her influence against her as decisively as she did at Suez. We must be fair: she *did* so at Suez, and on that occasion the United States-Russian diarchy proved remarkably effective. In addition, it is clear that Russia and America have in practice recognised their common interest in reducing tension over Berlin, and permit it to direct their policies to an extent which is increasingly disagreeable to their respective German allies. They have also acted together in resolving the Cuban crisis, and their capacity to do so has come as a shock to some of their other allies. But one can hardly expect that American public opinion would ever accept such action as the norm, and allow such a diarchy to replace their existing alliances as the foundation of their policy. Any President who adopted such a course would face so implacably hostile a Congress that he could hardly sustain it for long. Even more improbable does it appear that the Russians would enter into, or observe any agreement with respect to the non-aligned countries which clearly placed the communist powers by the side of the

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bourgeois-imperialists in opposition to the peace-loving and exploited toiling masses. One of the advantages of the Russian proposals for General and Complete Disarmament is that they save the Soviet Union from being manœuvred into any situation so incompatible with their Communist mission. The forces of opposition within the Russian hierarchy to any such deviation would surely make the path even of so skilled a politician as Khrushchev a thorny, if not impassable one.

In any case, as we have observed, the opportunity for such a diarchy is already passing. China is within a few years of becoming a nuclear power, and nothing short of physical intervention is likely to stop her. Here indeed we have a fair test of Mr. Strachey's proposals. It is certainly in Russia's long-term interests to prevent China from becoming a nuclear power, and probably every member of the Politbureau knows it. But test-ban or no test-ban, is it really conceivable that Russia would stand idly by, much less help, in any American attempt to destroy Chinese nuclear capacity? Nor is it really likely that a united Western Europe, approaching the United States in wealth and productive capacity, will indefinitely remain militarily dependent on her. Indeed few Americans desire that she should. That gives us four nuclear powers, with Britain, if she does not enter Europe, a fifth. To ask whether India, faced by a nuclear-armed China, would be able for long to resist the temptation to become a sixth, and whether the other members of the nuclear club would in their turn be able to resist the temptation to help her, takes us into the realms of remote but not irrelevant speculation.

IT IS DIFFICULT to foresee how any such Concert of Nuclear Powers would function. There is nothing inherently improbable in it. The nineteenth-century Concert of Russia, Austria, France, Prussia, and Britain would have seemed no less unlikely to seventeenth-century Europe, racked as it was by ideological feuds which parallel those of our own time. Nor would it necessarily prove a less effective instrument for keeping the peace than is the existing balance of terror. Historically speaking, a multiple balance of this kind can be at least as stable as a naked confrontation of two blocs. The antagonisms between its members are less sharp, because less easily identified with moral absolutes; conflicts between them, fought out within a ring of powerful neutrals, are more likely to be limited in nature and scope. But the transi-

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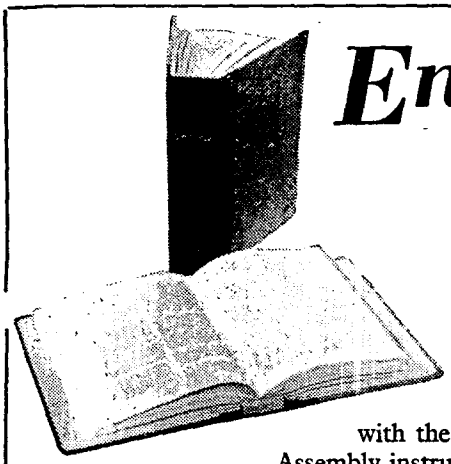
tion from this pattern to a world authority would be a considerable step, and Mr. Strachey, naturally enough, cannot tell us clearly how it would be made.

Indeed, Mr. Strachey pins his hope less on any foreseeable changes in the political organisation of the world than on changes of attitude among mankind as a whole, which can already be discerned and which will of themselves make it easier to bring a world order into being. It is worth quoting him on this *in extenso*:

> The three social forces which can be relied upon to push the world in the direction of collaboration under the authority of some nucleus ... of world power are these. First, there is a tendency for the economic and social systems of the advanced, industrialised nation-states to approximate to each other, whether they are organised in the communist or the capitalist way. Secondly, there is the sheer dread of nuclear war. And thirdly, and in the long run the most important, a new attitude of mind is emerging, an attitude transcending both national and ideological loyalties; an attitude of mind essentially concerned to find a way in which the human race may hope to continue to inhabit its narrow planet.... Already the traveller of the nineteen-sixties, using hours upon his journeys where even his father used months, may on the whole be more surprised at the similarities he may discover between the parts of the contemporary world than with their diversities. If he goes to New Delhi, to Moscow, to New York, to London, Rome, Frankfurt or Paris, to Cairo or Lagos, to Sydney, to Rio de Janeiro, or even to Peking, he will find, at the upper directing end of society, not very different kinds of men engaged on not very different kinds of work. He will find them reading the news of the same events in their newspapers (though presented with different biases); moved by decreasingly dissimilar forms of art and literature, reading, wherever they are allowed to, many of the same books, learning almost exactly the same scientific laws for the control of natural forces, and beginning to be aware that the various religions which some of them profess are parallel attempts to give an insight into the nature of ultimate reality. What can all this mean, but a startlingly rapid coming into being of a single world civilisation?

All this is true up to a point. Mr. Strachey's description is reminiscent of Gibbon's panegyrics of that urbane, tolerant, and ubiquitous eighteenth-century society in Europe whose humanism brought to an end two centuries of religious bigotry and civil war. But there are two things to be noted about this society of experts, scientists, administrators, and entrepreneurs which Mr. Strachey describes. The first is their indif-



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ference to questions of political ideology. Such men are prepared to support any government which guarantees an orderly basis for their work. To Mr. Strachey's centres of this world-culture we can add Johannesburg, Havana, Madrid, Kuwait, Accra. They will, if it is made worth their while, work in a corrupt or a despotic dictatorship as willingly as in a constitutional or, come to that, in a Communist state. Is the lesson to be drawn from this that, if we want peace, we must acquiesce in a total political relativism, as the eighteenth-century acquiesced in a total religious relativism? Must freedom of the press, racial equality, representative government be ranked with the Real Presence and the Apostolic Succession as matters over which men are no longer seriously prepared to contend with one another, and the absence of which they must accept with a regretful shrug?

The second characteristic to be noted is that these men, like Gibbon's urbane aristocracy, are, in Mr. Strachey's words, "at the upper directing end of society." There are other men, however, and they are important too. This growing together of national élites, linked by air-travel and a common culture, has to be paid for by greater stresses and divisions between those élites and the societies from which they have emerged and from which, to a certain extent, they have grown away. We have seen instances of this in the past. The "westernisation" of the Russian upper classes in the nineteenth century, for example, their adoption of modes of thought and ideals largely irrelevant to the problems of their own land, was an important factor in the disaster which overcame them in 1917. Tensions of this kind within the developing societies of Africa, Asia, and Latin America are considerable. One must never underrate the fuel which stubborn, atavistic separatism, or irrational nationalism, can provide for political agitation, in a nuclear as in a non-nuclear world. Under the glittering surface which Mr. Strachey describes, as under that of eighteenth-century Europe or that of the comfortable cosmopolitan society of 1913, dangerous fires are still burning, and show no signs of dying down.

THESE MAY SEEM DEPRESSING REFLECTIONS, but it cannot truthfully be said that we have gone so far towards abandoning the political habits and attitudes which have made the world such an

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uncertain place to live in throughout our recorded history as Mr. Strachey would have us believe. But he has thought hard and bravely about these problems: his positive proposals are realistic, and his hopes are less Utopian than most. And without hope of some kind, as he discerns, many people would find the situation impossible to bear. "We must believe," Mr. Strachey concludes nobly,

> that one day our descendants will scale and possess the Holy Mountain of Peace. For us it is too distant and too high. Yet we can see its peak. If we were to lose sight of it we should wander for ever in the wilderness.

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He is a poet of public themes. Even when he is writing of himself—of his reactions to the seasons, war, sex, or metropolitan awfulness—he carefully represents himself as the civilised creature in its public, primitive, or natural environment. The kind of poetry he has not yet written is an altogether more chancy affair, occasioned by more private problems; it is suc-

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cessful only when the poet has been able to transcend the occasion: to extract the universal from the particular. Although there are indications of something new in the latest poems, Mr. Fuller ends the book—almost defiantly—with these lines:

His task is not to beg the distant star
Out of its white majestic dust to bless
The small affairs that stab him to the heart,
But with blue weeping eyes discern the cause
And use his alphabet to state its laws,
Leaving the words to childish gods and art.

Thus, despite his always delightful sophistication, when he is writing of "the poet" he is self-conscious, vague, and helplessly romantic:

A poet in a tower
With rapture watched an army dye the ford
And paper swans upon the stormy glooms:
Man's love is more primeval than a bloom's,
Another wrote, slain by a rose's sword.

The diction here is mechanical, and the unrealised state of mind underlying the whole passage (and there are more like it) resembles that found in *The Defence of Guinevere.*

Elsewhere, in an uneven but interesting recent sequence, *Faustian Sketches,* he writes (as Faust's servant):

When bladder gets me up at four I'd give
My soul for sweeter breath and tighter pills,
And sometimes for a second really live
With magic miracles.

In this sequence Mr. Fuller comes closest to stating his lack, which he sometimes calls "magic" (here Faust is speaking):

Power to transcend the sad toupée,
The wiser heart, I shall require.
And magic is to set me free.

To range the kingdoms of the sea
And pluck the salt rose from the briar.
It's magic that has ravished me
And magic is to set me free.

What is this magic? It is, I think, the sense of wonder releasing itself into mysterious and inspired language, the excitement that accompanies the poet's exploration of his private self —an excitement that may be explained, at least in part, by the paradoxically felt certainty of ability to communicate an emotion so intensely and essentially lonely.

But it would be mean to dwell upon the limitations—one might almost say the set limitations—of so honest a writer. Mr. Fuller's *Collected Poems* represents a real achievement. This is put into bold relief by the verse of those who imitate him or try to borrow his acrid, amiable tone of voice. One of the purely inci-

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dental values of this book is that it cruelly shows up the work of a new wave of poetasters: the authors of those "intelligible" verses, written in accordance with "rules," that make neat, small points. Such authors are using verse-making as a means to an end.

One values Mr. Fuller because his poems are so obviously prompted by different, less ambitious, less trivial needs. His readability does not arise from any easily acquired slickness, but from seriousness and true awareness.

Mr. Fuller expresses his position most clearly in the Horatian *Translation* (ironically so called because the poet himself has *not* abdicated):

Now that the barbarians have got as far as Picra,
And all the new music is written in the twelve-tone scale,
And I am anyway approaching my fortieth birthday,
I will dissemble no longer.

Anyone happy in this age and place
Is daft or corrupt. Better to abdicate
From a material and spiritual terrain
Fit only for barbarians.

Here Mr. Fuller is at his best: humorous, honest, and authoritative. It is the poetry of the civilised attitude rather than of passion; but its strength is derived from a decency, unsentimental concern, and intellectual self-effacement not to be found in the culture-marionettes who ape its urbane tone, but who lack the qualities of character that are required to achieve it.

Mr. Fuller retained his early Marxism until relatively late, and in the poems of his middle period this sometimes takes on a specious appearance—as in the *Obituary of R. Fuller*, where the lines

What determines human fate
Is the class structure of the state

read somewhat oddly—even if in a way the poet is laughing at himself. But there are fewer signs of this in his latest poems, notably the *Faustian Sketches* and in the twenty-one fine *Meredithian Sonnets* that close the book. Here, one feels, Mr. Fuller is less certain of the full implications of his themes; and although his increasing and salutary awareness of the unknown has not yet got into his language, it has got into his themes, which are often complex—even recondite. One of the Sonnets (XVI) gives a clue:

The wife was in the bedroom: in the attic
The servant slept, her cheek still smeared with ashes.
Diaphanous, the bedroom's shifts and sashes:
Around the servant's body, unemphatic
Calico. Yet the evening found his feet
Creaking the attic stair. At first she thought
To hide the hard ebullient flesh he fought

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To show, and left him straddling the narrow sheet
The master of her inwardness and tears.
But later nights she was already bare
When he ascended merely to declare
How wild the wind, his loneliness and fears.
Soon he was visiting no more that room,
Preferring to continue to make cower
Beneath its silk the form he lacked the power
To waken, and speak freely of his doom.

The detail of this poem suffers from most of Mr. Fuller's linguistic weaknesses—over-use of "effect" adjectives to fill up a line, forced rhymes (such as "bare")—but here at last is a hint of a *personal* predicament, a private situation. It has been skilfully dramatised by the novelist-element in the poet, but this device only serves to communicate it more powerfully and disturbingly.

Mr. Fuller's well-deserved success as a novelist may have caused him to experience a new difficulty in writing poems; as this increases his poems may become fewer, but rewarding in an unexpected and perhaps even more valuable way. Meanwhile, this collection demands our respect and admiration.

Martin Seymour-Smith

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The Break-up of the Habsburg Empire 1914–1918. By Z. A. B. Zeman, *O.U.P.*, 30s.

It is understandable that the 19th-century progressives should have had their knives into the Habsburg Monarchy. Clearly there was no Gladstone in Vienna. Although it was ludicrous to think of the Empire as a *Völkerkerker*, in the light of the ugly rush towards freedom and enlightenment through nationalism, which ended in Hitler and Mussolini, Austria-Hungary certainly appeared to be wilfully behind the times. It looks different now. Yet from Palmerston, divided between his jealousy of tyranny and his appreciation of the Monarchy as a European necessity, to his spiritual heir, Mr. A. J. P. Taylor, the problems of old Austria have been excluded from sympathetic contemplation.

This loss has been severe. For more than a hundred years the experience of the rulers of a complex society deriving from a dozen different peoples, hopelessly intermingled in the strategic centre of Europe, has been a closed book. The Habsburg tragedy would have been less bleak had we been allowed to learn from it. The

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grave charge against the Western liberals is that they refused to read their lessons and thus failed to make any useful contribution to the problem, still with us, of how societies under the impact of industrialisation and popular education were to be governed and held together. They contented themselves with slogans —thus leaving the field to Lenin and Hitler, who also knew how to use slogans. By writing off Austria as a peripheral phenomenon (peripheral to what? to Bismarck?), unfit to be taken seriously, by denying that the Habsburgs had any validity at all once the Turk had ceased from troubling, by throwing themselves uncritically into the fervour of "popular nationalism" (or at least resigning themselves to it), they excised from the general consciousness a large area of reality.

Most people will tell you to-day that the Habsburgs had to go because the nations over which they ruled rose up in wrath against them: popular nationalism (without inverted commas) might be in many ways deplorable, but it was an irresistible force which could neither be diverted nor restrained.

I wonder. . . . Did nationalism, outside a few specialised areas, really exist as a spontaneous, popular force any more than Bolshevism? People all over Europe wanted, as they want to-day, to be left in peace to go about their own local affairs and prosper. Nationalism is not patriotism. The real nationalists, the men who stirred up chauvinistic passions (which might, nevertheless, be purified by martyrdom) were intellectuals dreaming history and politicians concerned with aggrandisement. The greatest manipulators of "popular nationalism" in the 19th-century were Bismarck and Cavour. Louis Napoleon was keen on it too.

A few men, like Palacky in Bohemia, Strossmayer in Croatia, Fischhof in Vienna, dreamt of ethnic units managing their own affairs and living in harmony and concord under the Habsburg crown. But the real assault on the Habsburgs came from Bismarck and Cavour, working to aggrandise Prussia and Piedmont, from the Hungarians, intent on the Magyarisation of their own subject peoples and then dominating the Empire, from Germans who looked down on Slavs, from Masaryk, who invented a polyglot Czechoslovakia to be ruled by Czechs.

The fall of the Habsburg Monarchy may or may not have been inevitable; but it was not made inevitable by popular nationalism seen as a spontaneous force. If there was one thing that was certain in 1914, it was that the overwhelming majority of the inhabitants of the Monarchy wished it to continue. This majority included many who were highly articulate about

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their grievances—Kramar, the Czech nationalist, who wanted a Habsburg Monarchy dominated by its Slav majority; Tisza in Hungary, who hoped to capture the Empire for Budapest; the members of the Croat Diet who offered undying loyalty in exchange for an increased measure of autonomy in local government. Since the last war there have been a number of attempts to put the record straight; but there is a lot of ground still to be cleared. The distortions of Western liberals and socialists, of nationalist Czechs, Poles, Yugoslavs and Magyars, of the Nazis and the Marxist inheritors, die hard.

Now Mr. Zeman has made an extremely useful contribution by addressing himself to the period of actual disintegration under the impact of the 1914 war in general and, in particular, emigré propaganda, President Wilson and Messrs. Wickham Steed and R. W. Seton-Watson—intrepid pioneers in the intoxicating new game, to which we all owe so much, of political warfare aimed at the destruction of states.

For years before 1914 there had been prophecies of doom, above all in Vienna itself. Even a quarter of a century after the Habsburg collapse a man as knowledgeable and intelligent as Mr. Taylor could write as though the Monarchy had been moribund since the Treaty of Paris, waiting only for the least push from outside to shatter it finally. But the push, when it came, took the form of four years of appalling battery, accompanied towards the end by ruthless and reckless political warfare; and even then it was a close-run thing.

In 1954 Mr. Wickham Steed, as quoted by Mr. Zeman, wrote in a letter to *The Times Literary Supplement*:

> When I left Vienna in July, 1913, it was with a feeling that I was escaping from a doomed edifice.

But he had not written like that at the time. In the preface of the first edition (1913) of *The Habsburg Monarchy*, also quoted by Mr. Zeman, he wrote:

> Errors, weaknesses or prejudices on the part of the Monarch, of statesmen and races may, it is true, bring the monarchy to the verge of ruin; disaster may seem to portend the fulfilment of prophesies of disintegration; but I have been unable to perceive during ten years of consistent observation and experience—years, moreover, filled with struggle and crisis—any sufficient reason why, with moderate foresight on the part of the dynasty, the Habsburg dynasty should not retain its rightful place in the European community. Its internal crises are often crises of growth rather than of decay.

Indeed, when the push came (admittedly as the result of a failure of foresight), there was no

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uprising. Even the terrorists in Bosnia lay low. There were a few men, Klofac in Bohemia, Trumbic in Croatia, who wanted to see the Monarchy destroyed. But these counted for very little; and even the harshness and stupidity of the army authorities, who assumed control over large parts of the Empire, did not drive either the peoples or the national politicians to revolt. The army was a truly supra-national estate, and, as elsewhere, it was war-weariness, not political doctrine, which weakened it in the end. Masaryk, who had only just arrived, with reluctance, at the conclusion that the Habsburgs must go, had an impossibly hard task in front of him; and when at the end of 1916 it began to look as though there might be a compromise peace he was heavy with despair. Unless the shooting continued there was no hope of his swinging the people at home into line behind him, and he knew it.

All this Mr. Zeman brings out very well. After a shaky start, because he begins with the Ruthenians, who were not central to his main story (but he has a reason for this: Tsarist Russia was the first of the Entente powers by a long chalk to conceive the notion of using political warfare to split up the Monarchy), he gets into his stride. The story he has to tell then develops a tragic momentum of its own which carries it through a forest of detail and documentation covering the whole of Central and South-eastern Europe, until the whole issue narrows down to what Masaryk could do, for the South Slavs as well as for the Czechs, when he had all the threads in his hands.

THE MAIN THREAD was American opinion. For a long time neither Britain nor France had the least intention of breaking up the Empire, while the establishment of an independent union of South Slavs was a threat to Italy's Adriatic aspirations. At the end of 1916, after the Berlin peace offer, President Wilson requested the British to state their war aims. Whitehall replied in January, 1917, with a set of aims designed to please the Americans. They looked democratic and good. In some detail they exalted the concept of self-determination for small nations. But these war aims were not in the least thought out, and few people realised that implicit in them was the dismemberment of the Habsburg Monarchy. Under the stress of war, nevertheless, statesmanship had abdicated and made way for demagogy, appealing indifferently to the basest and the loftiest instincts of the common man.

Germany did not help. At first, hoping for a separate peace, the Germans alienated the

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The Doctor who wrote this letter has given us special permission to publish it.

Poles for fear of exasperating Russia. The subsequent bickering between Berlin and Vienna over the future of Poland was a sordid story. It was not the only one. The Hungarians used their foodstocks to blackmail a starving Vienna. And after the Russian revolution and Brest-Litovsk, Germany sat selfishly on the Ukrainian bread-basket, refusing to succour the ally who had helped her to win it. Indeed, Hohenzollern had already, prematurely, written off Habsburg at the Spa Conference in May, 1918, taking its revenge on the Emperor Karl for his own earlier attempts to make peace with France and thenceforth treating the Monarchy as an expendable satellite. With the failure of the Ludendorf offensive of March, 1918, it was all over, and while the Imperial Army still fought on, the politicians and journalists of the Entente began to re-draw the map of Europe quite ignoring the necessity, afterwards perceived by both Hitler and Stalin, for imposing some sort of a coherent pattern on ethnical chaos.

Better Hitler than the Habsburgs, Benes was one day to say; and then by implication, better Stalin than the Habsburgs. Benes was an exceptional case, outstanding for the narrowness of his view. But in 1918 the mood behind those words prevailed. Those who think it was an unfortunate mood will find sustenance in Mr. Zeman's book, which exhibits many sad facts long forgotten and some scarcely known at any time. Nobody wants to restore the Habsburgs, but until we understand what they did we cannot begin to understand what went wrong. Mr. Zeman is not infallible. Some readers may be put off by certain inaccuracies—a consistent and worrying misspelling of Conrad von Hötzendorf, a dotty reference to the "Tegetthoff" on p. 99, a misleading reference to the Archduke Frank Ferdinand and Trialism. But these are not important, displaying only a slight thinness of knowledge round the fringes of his subject, which he illuminates steadily, clearly, and with no trick shadows.

Edward Crankshaw

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LETTERS

Isherwood

IN HIS REVIEW of *Down There on a Visit*, Stuart Hampshire [ENCOUNTER, November] seems to want to make a virtue of the author's defects while at the same time recognising these. The wide-eyed, hollow narrator, the banal and often frivolous views Mr. Hampshire would justify as aspects of an experiment in a great tradition of *Bildungsroman*. Yet reading *Down There on a Visit*, more than one admirer of Mr. Isherwood's earliest work has deplored its triviality and lamented the decline of a once vivid talent. The younger author's gifts as an observer, his humour and verbal vitality that gave such promise in *Goodbye to Berlin* and *Lions and Shadows* appear now to have been unaccompanied by the kind of imaginative intelligence that can shape experience into significant form.

If we refer to "ambiguously autobiographical" novels like *A la recherche du temps perdu* and *Portrait of the Artist*, we find it hard to accept Mr. Isherwood's lack-lustre performance as "a brilliant addition to the series." Surely Mr. Hampshire credits him with having thought and felt more profoundly than he did about what he wanted to make of this novel.

W. K. ROSE

Vassar College, N.Y.

Wain's Oxford

I HAVE BEEN reading John Wain's *Sprightly Running*, and find there a good many references to myself. Many of them are extremely kind, and all are inoffensive: but there is one passage which I must contradict on merely factual grounds. Whether the matter it deals with is at all worth recording, is doubtful: but if it is to be recorded, let us get it right.

On page 183 Mr. Wain is talking about a very informal club that used to meet in my rooms, and says he was "surprised by the alliances it was capable of forming." He thinks Dorothy Sayers was an ally "because she was a Christian and liked Dante"; Roger L. Green, "because he was an authority on fairy-tales"; and Roy Campbell, "because he was a Roman Catholic" and "anti-socialist."

The truth is:

1. Dorothy Sayers, so far as I know, was not even acquainted with any of us except Charles Williams and me. We two had got to know her at different times and in different ways. In my case, the initiative came from her. She was the first person of importance who ever wrote me a fan-letter. I liked her, originally, because she liked me; later, for the extraordinary zest and edge of her conversation—as I like a high wind. She was a friend, not an ally. Needless to say, she never met our own club, and probably never knew of its existence.

2. Mr. Green was never more than a casual acquaintance to any one of us except me. In the friendship between him and me, he took the initiative. It was at first a wholly bookish friendship; and to the present day, religion has seldom been mentioned between us, and politics never. He was, and is, a friend, not an ally. We meet solely because we like one another.

3. I loathed and loathe Roy Campbell's particular blend of Catholicism and Fascism, and told him so. I got to know him before I knew who he was. He was for some weeks a mysterious stranger in a pub whose skyscraping and hair-raising stories made me feel as if I had blundered into a picaresque novel. My appreciation of a human flavour quite new to my social palate had nothing to do with approval or agreement or even belief. Mr. Wain might as well think that Alcinous and his court were inspired by diplomatic considerations when they listened with delight to the amazing yarn that Odysseus spun them. And when at last the stranger let out that his name was Campbell, and I (at a long shot) said "Not Roy Campbell?" I thought it right, before taking his hand, to ask whether he knew that I had already lampooned him in print. He said he did. There is here no question of alliance. Nor did he even become a friend in any deep sense: not as Mr. Green, or Mr. Wain himself, are my friends. Campbell was more like a tumble in the ring.

The whole picture of myself as one forming a cabinet, or cell, or coven, is erroneous. Mr. Wain has mistaken purely personal relationships for alliances. He was surprised that these friends were "so different from one another." But were they more different from one another than he is from all of them? Aren't we always surprised at our friends' other friendships? As at all his tastes? One may even discover (not without horror) that one's friend prefers bottled beer to beer or processed cheese to cheese. We have to face it.

C. S. LEWIS

Magdalene College, Cambridge

MR. LEWIS describes his correction as "factual," but I should have thought it more a matter of emphasis and selection. I have, it seems, described certain personal friendships of his as "alliances" which his "group" was "capable of forming." This, of course, is always happening to all of us. Anyone who has found serious work to do in the world, and pursues that work with energy, will find support and encouragement within a certain circle of friends, and sooner or later will have to suffer the annoyance of seeing these friends described as allies or accomplices.

Still, I am sorry that I, who have often suffered this annoyance, should be guilty of inflicting it, especially on my old tutor. All I can urge in self-defence is that my account of Mr. Lewis's "alliances" becomes more intelligible if read in context. I have just finished describing (pp. 175–179) what was, or appeared to be from the outside, the psychology of Dr. Leavis's cell in Cambridge. This cell tended to process its members into a certain

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type, and I give a sketch, rather in the manner of a 17th-century "character," of this type. Then I pass to the informal club presided over by Lewis at Oxford. And here I note a complete absence of the demand for conformity. "Lewis, unlike Leavis, is basically a humble man. While he will fight long and hard for his beliefs, he is entirely free of the pride which refuses reinforcement for the sake of keeping within its hands the sole glory of conquest —or, if need be, of heroic defeat." Then follows the passage to which Mr. Lewis objects—whose sole purpose was to demonstrate the larger humanity, the wide range of sympathies, which made his example so important to my opening mind.

This was an embattled period of Lewis's life, and if these friends didn't offer essential support, if they were not in some sense "allies," what were they? What Mr. Lewis is concerned to refute is the suggestion that these were not disinterested friendships, that they were associations tainted with other considerations than the purely personal. But surely no one thinks that, or would be more likely to think it, after reading *Sprightly Running*?

JOHN WAIN

London

"Pale Fire"

IT IS disappointing that scientific terms are misused so frequently by literary people. To give some examples: neurosis, psychosis, delusion, hallucination, psychopath, seminal, schizophrenic, manic-depressive, paranoid.

There are some particularly painful transgressions of optical principles in Mary MacCarthy's ingenious review of Nabokov's "Pale Fire" [ENCOUNTER, October].

1. "Pale fire, a reflective poem, is also a prism of reflections." For anybody with an elementary understanding of prisms, this sentence is absurd. There is worse to follow:

2. "The multiplication of levels refracts a prismatic opaline light on Faculty Row." Having left reflection, we proceed to the refraction of light. What can be meant by refracting a prismatic light? Presumably the writer is trying to convey the effect of chromatic aberration whereby white light, on passing through a prism, is so altered by the effect of refraction on the differing wavelengths of its constituent rays that the various colours of the spectrum are apparent. If so, how can the light be opaline?

3. "Whether the visible world, for Nabokov is a prismatic reflection of eternity. . . ."

This, again, is shocking. The phrase the writer is groping for is "a spectral reflection of eternity," or, preferably, "a many coloured reflection of eternity."

This is a serious problem. I have heard a distinguished Irish poet tell a delighted audience that the work of one of his contemporaries was heavier than heavy water! The general public will increasingly misuse scientific terms, inadequately explained by the scientific correspondents of the popular press.

Writers, who seek to purify the dialect of the tribe, cannot continue such misuse. They must come to terms with the scientific age.

(DR.) PEADAR MAC MAGHNAIS

West Hill Hospital,
Dartford, Kent

Faludy

IN HIS MOVING MEMOIRS of which you have published a chapter (September, 1962), Mr. George Faludy mentions several times the lovely town of Poszony. Mr. Faludy, who is himself one of our greatest translators of world poetry, will certainly agree that he or his translator should have taken into account the unfamiliarity of Western readers. Who would guess that the city of Poszony is not generally known under her Hungarian name? It used to be internationally called Pressburg and is, in our times, habitually mentioned under her Slovakian name of Bratislava.

Paris BÁNDY FERENC

Shaw and Marxian Tragedy

A FOOTNOTE to Lewis Feuer's fascinating article "Marxian Tragedians" [ENCOUNTER, November, 1962].

Shaw was careful and often deliberately ironic in the descriptive sub-titles he chose for his plays. We have "Histories," "An Adventure," "A Recruiting Pamphlet," "A Chronicle Play," "A Comedy and a Philosophy," "A Fable Play," and even "A Revolutionary Romancelet."

In the entire canon, only *The Doctor's Dilemma* is entitled "A Tragedy." At first sight this is not an obvious designation and Shaw was, so far as I am aware, reticent about it. In view of what Mr. Feuer tells us of the relation of the play to the Eleanor Marx-Edward Aveling affair, the choice of sub-title becomes plain.

Churchill College, GEORGE STEINER
Cambridge

Mailer

I AM AFRAID there is an error in what you wrote of me in your November issue in which you printed my essay on Norman Mailer. This essay is my contribution to a volume of critical evaluations of the middle-generation American novelists, edited by Nona Balakian and Charles Simmons and soon to be published by Doubleday & Co. in this country. I am not, as you stated, a co-editor with Miss Balakian. Indeed, my only connection with the volume is the contribution of my essay on Mailer.

New York City DIANA TRILLING

"Culture"

RE YOUR "Life & Letters To-day" in your last issue:

Edouard Herriot said, a good many years ago, of culture: *"C'est ce qui reste quand on a tout oublié."* I have not the slightest doubt that M. Spaak never had the intention of making an original pronouncement.

Huis ter Heide C. J. BISSERY

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Life & Letters Today

Cairo

DISCUSSING *the population problem, the Pakistani delegate to the World Conference on imbalances in international economic relationships, Mr. Altaf Gauhar, said: "Sex is the only poetry known to the bush. They procreate when they are happy, unhappy, or indifferent."*

OBSERVER

Chicago

AT NOON *Wednesday the flower of American letters assembled to gather for posterity pearls from the new champion's unbruised lips. Instead of Sonny Liston, they found Norman Mailer, an author on parole, in possession of the microphone, floodlights in his face and television cameras grinding. He was assuring posterity that he planned to prove in public debate that Patterson actually won the fight by a sixth-round knockout. The champion arrived to take the seat of honour and the author was supported to the door....*

Mailer, on his feet throughout, had been demanding to ask a question and others had been shouting him down. The champion lifted a vast, imperious hand, palm out. "Leave the bum talk," he commanded, grinning wide.

"I picked Patterson to win in the sixth round," the author said, "by a one-punch knockout—".

"He's still drunk", Liston told the crowd....

At the end Mailer made his way to the front. "You called me a bum", he said.

Liston gazed down at him.

"I call you a bum," he said tranquilly, "and you are a bum. Everybody calls me a bum. I'm a bigger bum than you, because I'm bigger."

He thrust out five great fingers.

"Okay, bum?" he said.

Oxford

GIBBON *formed every paragraph (his were long paragraphs, too) in his mind before uttering it, or before writing it in his beautiful hand. The modern writer contemptuously throws his words to a typist to catch, in rambling clichés, and has to be constantly reminded how far he has got; or he mechanises them on to his own typewriter.*

We have had, in history, ages of visual communication. They have been ages of propaganda. The ages of enlightenment have always depended on clear thought and clear language and moreover, on one language for all subjects: a polished precision instrument, difficult to acquire and applicable to all purposes.

SUNDAY TIMES

London

WE *have become intellectually lazy: or, perhaps, we have simply remained intellectually lazy in a world in which strenuous intellectual effort is the condition of survival. Among all the other more pretentious reasons given for the condition of the country to-day, this appears to me the most important one, and the one which is most often ignored. Perhaps the voters who are voting for the Liberals to-day are, after all, right. When there is nothing worth voting for, why not be honest and vote for nothing?* Vacuum in vacuo.

THE QUEEN

Havana

ONE *Havana resident was recently criticised by a Young Rebel committee member because it was noticed that, instead of having any of the three Cuban revolutionary newspapers delivered to his door in the morning, he apparently subscribed only to an "organ of Yankee imperialism." The newspaper referred to was The Times.*

THE TIMES

London

DIRECTOR *Bill Hitchcock told of the incidents during the TV filming and the rehearsals of Constantine FitzGibbon's "When the Kissing Had To Stop." Six extras were dressed in black leather jackets, jackboots, helmets, and white gloves, marching through the West End—Sten guns at the ready. There wasn't a camera in sight. "But nobody took a scrap of notice," said Mr. Hitchcock. "We even made the storm-troopers march straight through a bus queue to get some reaction from the people. But they just stepped politely aside."*

There's something frightening about people not seeing anything out of the ordinary in being jostled by armed storm-troopers. Have programmes of continued violence—supplementing the newsreels—softened up the public to a ready acceptance of strong-arm men in their midst?

SUNDAY CITIZEN

Florence

BRIGITTE BARDOT *is not to press charges against a 33-year-old Italian poet being held by police after twice breaking into her hotel room here to read her a poem.*

DAILY MAIL

London

WHITBREAD, *the 200-year-old City of London brewery, yesterday made a £22,000,000 bid for the Keg bitter firm of Flowers. It would add 1,200 public-houses to its strength as sixth largest brewers in the country. Sir Fordham Flower is Chairman of the Royal Shakespeare Theatre at Stratford-on-Avon. Colonel Whitbread is a member of the board of the London Old Vic. Their mutual interest in Shakespeare often brought them together, and they always ended up talking beer. Colonel Whitbread said at his home at Godalming, Surrey, last night: "Sir Fordham and I have been great friends since our Eton days, but it was the common interest in Shakespeare that helped the merger along."*

DAILY MAIL

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THE PRESS

The Week of Cuba

"Confusion now hath made his masterpiece . . ."
MACBETH (II, iii)

THE STORY of the "Siege Perilous"[1] began one day early last October when information was received in Washington about certain new military installations in Cuba. Orders were given to obtain "more details," but the first reports were apparently inconclusive. Hurricane "Ella" made further reconnaissance impossible for a few days. Then on October 14th the U-2s flew again and the photographs revealed that rocket ramps had been built and that Soviet medium-range missiles were already in Cuba. The next evening Secretary of Defence McNamara was informed, and on the 16th the President was put in the picture. Two days later, on October 18th, Andrey Gromyko, the Soviet foreign minister, called at the White House for a prolonged talk: he told Mr. Kennedy that Russia had supplied "only defensive weapons" to Cuba. On Friday a series of high-level talks began in Washington; in Florida naval and air force units were being amassed. A news black-out was imposed on Sunday, but in the course of Monday it became known that "a very important statement" was soon to be made. At 7.00 on Monday local time (midnight European time) President Kennedy announced a naval blockade of Cuba as a first step to stop the build-up of medium-range missiles; this blockade was to apply only to war material. This decision had been taken after it had become known that missiles that were capable of hurling one megaton each—roughly fifty times the destructive power of the Hiroshima bomb—at U.S. sites were now located in Cuba and those for launching five-megaton missiles were under construction.

The news reached the British press at midnight, Monday, October 22nd, very late for comment in next morning's edition. But as Michael Foot's left-wing *Tribune* remarked:

> I'm glad to say that those which did [comment] were not fooled by Kennedy's manœuvres. I praise the *Daily Herald* particularly. . . . Even the *Daily Telegraph* was not happy about the move. . . . And the *Guardian* slammed the Americans. . . .

The *Herald* in its first comment pressed for "irrefutable proof":

> Even if the bases ARE in fact being built, President Kennedy surely would have done better if he had first reported this to the UN Security Council. . . .

The *Telegraph*, too, thought that the United Nations and the Organisation of American States should have been informed and America's allies consulted:

> He [President Kennedy] has surprised more than his enemies by the announcement which he made last night.

The *Guardian* was perhaps most critical of all. It doubted whether the blockade would be effective (for the Russians could easily establish an airlift) and

> . . . if Mr. Khrushchev has really begun to build offensive missile bases in Cuba he has done so primarily to demonstrate to the U.S. and the world the meaning of American bases close to the Soviet frontier.

The *Guardian* editorial writer reminded its readers, many of whom were surely aware of the fact, that Turkey had a common frontier with the Soviet Union and he believed that Mr. Khrushchev thought (with some reason) that the effect of what was being done in Cuba would be to weaken America's foothold in Western Europe; "what is sauce for Cuba is sauce also for Turkey." The *Guardian* ended with these predictions:

> The effects of President Kennedy's action may well be felt long after the American elections next month. . . . In the end the United States may find that it has done its cause, its friends, and its own true interests little good.

The *Daily Worker*, somewhat more predictably, came out with a "hands off Cuba" appeal:

> His [Kennedy's] excuse for this act of a bully won't bear a minute's examination.

Only the *Evening Standard* and the *Daily Express* said in their leading articles that President Kennedy would find "full understanding and sympathy" in Britain. The *Standard* did not believe the Turkey argument had "much relevance" in this context and added that no serious military action was likely to be taken by the Russians in Cuba.

[1] Richard Rovere, writing from Washington in *The New Yorker* (3 Nov.): "The President said in his address to the nation that his first knowledge of the new and dangerous developments in Cuba had been brought to him on Tuesday, October 16th, at nine in the morning. From then until last Sunday, he managed to carry on without betraying any sense of an impending ordeal . . . On one occasion, though, he expressed an uncharacteristic sentiment in a characteristic way. In the afternoon of the day he received the first intelligence reports, he met with a group of newspaper and broadcasting people who were in Washington for some conferences organised by the State Department. At the conclusion of a short and rather routine talk on foreign policy, he said there came to his mind a poem by a Spaniard named Ortega that had been translated by Robert Graves. The text he recited was:

> *Bullfight critics ranked in rows*
> *Crowd the enormous Plaza full;*
> *But only one is there who* knows
> *And he's the man who fights the bull.*

Ortega is Domingo Ortega, a bullfighter. The poem appeared in the British monthly ENCOUNTER in December 1961. Robert Graves quoted it as reflecting his feelings when he won the Oxford Chair of Poetry, a position he said might be called 'a Siege Perilous. . . .'"

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On Wednesday, American armed forces all over the globe had been alerted; so was the Cuban army. The Organisation of American States approved President Kennedy's action. The Security Council was convened, a declaration of the Soviet government was published, and the blockade came into force.

There was not, however, much evidence of the "sympathy and understanding" in the British press which some papers had predicted the day before. True enough, the *Telegraph* disposed of the Security Council argument: "It affords no guarantee that even the most justified American complaint would be impartially or thoroughly redressed." It also rejected the Cuba/Turkey parallel. After all, this was a fresh threat and the balance of power was very precarious anyway: "There are limits to what the West can afford to tolerate."

This line was also taken by the *Times*—something *had* to be done, but the *Times* ended on a rather pessimistic note:

> In spite of all the differences in Russia's and America's records and motives... there is just enough similarity in the siting of some of the bases to cause the question to be raised... they may consider a bargain whereby each does away with a forward base or two.

The *Herald* put it very bluntly in an editorial headed "Kennedy's Suez." Kennedy was compared to Sir Anthony Eden on several counts: he had no excuse to "go it alone" and he had no real reason to complain because

> Khrushchev has taken no warlike action against these bases in Britain, Italy, Spain, Greece, Turkey and Pakistan... Castro could equally claim that any Soviet bases in Cuba are defensive....

Mr. Walter Lippmann, whose U.S. column is published in the *Herald*, wrote in a similar vein: "Turkey is a great liability in our relations with Cuba." The *Worker* called Kennedy's report about rocket bases in Cuba "farcical, fantastic, without a shadow of proof,' and said his action was "without parallel since Hitler's tirades against Czechoslovakia." Mr. Harold Wilson (appearing on TV) protested against the American blockade and the fact that Britain had not been consulted, and went on to press more parallels with Suez.

In the popular press, the *Sketch* called Prime Minister Macmillan to order ("This is no time for sabres, Mac") while the *Mirror* thought that President Kennedy had acted courageously:

> But whether this drastic answer to the Soviet challenge is as wise as it is courageous is open to grave doubt.

The *Guardian* continued to discuss the future of bases and stressed what it thought were some very awkward considerations. After all, if the Thor rocket sites in East Anglia and the Polaris installations in Holy Loch were defensive, couldn't the same be claimed for the Russian fishing port in the Caribbean?

> ... the argument has some strength and it will be hard to resist in the United Nations. By imposing a blockade the Americans have played into Khrushchev's hands.

The *Express* claimed "Britain must be there" (that is, at a meeting between Russian and U.S. leaders). Its defence correspondent was one of the very few who felt sure that a nuclear conflict would be avoided.[2] The only other such voice was again the *Evening Standard* who called it a "remote possibility" and thought that it was a good thing that the West had for once gained the offensive—it would strengthen its bargaining position and would ensure that Mr. Khrushchev would not misjudge the spirit of America over Berlin.

By Wednesday, then, a fairly clear pattern had emerged and one ought to pause therefore for a moment or two. A considerable section of public opinion (as reflected in the press) showed an almost total lack of understanding of the causes and the character of the crisis (a week later there were mild agonies of revisionism), and consequently came up with ideas for its solution that were at best, irrelevant.

Comparatively easy to understand was the "better-red-than-dead" school of thought, based as it is on the (undeniable) assumption that the results of nuclear war are too horrible to imagine and that Britain in particular is more exposed than most. It could be argued that "while there's life there's hope" (hope, for instance, that totalitarian Communism would "mellow" at some future date and change "from within" into a more humane system). As things are, the balance of power between West and East, whether likeable or not, has clearly been proving itself over the years as the best available guarantee against world war (for the time being). By weakening the West, by preaching the virtues of ambiguity and irresolution, would not the prospects of war increase, not decrease? It is conceivable that a very strong military power could remain neutral in a global conflict; but neutrality *per se*, especially if coupled with military weakness, is a very dangerous thing indeed. One hardly needed to labour the point in the Cuban week—events in India were already speaking for themselves. Hence the oft-marked paradox that it is the most militant "enemies of the bomb" in the West who, contrary to their praiseworthy intentions, actually enhance the possibility of thermo-nuclear war. Yet even if the West capitulated, if Lord Russell somehow succeeded in converting the Pentagon and the White House to his views, would the dangers of nuclear war be over? Would it not simply leave the field free, not for one world state but for the sovereign Communist super-powers to settle their conflicts between themselves in a vastly enlarged thermo-nuclear

[2] Sir William Hayter (former British Ambassador in Moscow) wrote in *The Observer* (11 November): "... There never was any danger of the Soviet Government starting an atomic war for Cuba. In saying this I am not being wise after the event; I said it in a broadcast on the second day of the Crisis, and if it was obvious even to me it must have been still more obvious to Mr. Kennedy and his advisers...."

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theatre of war? War between Russia and China would be more than a mere possibility once the "common danger" had been removed. There is far more missionary zeal in Moscow and Peking than in the capitals of the West. Mao and his friends (as Mr. Kardelj tells us) envisage with a large measure of equanimity the loss of several hundred million Chinese in order to make the world safe for the only true doctrine.

It is perhaps unfair to submit the tenets of the "better-red-than-dead school" of thought to rational examination; after all, it is not a rational theory but an emotional reaction, the expression of very real fear. And as Burke once put it, "No passion so effectively robs the mind of all its power of acting and reasoning as fear...."

More difficult to understand are the milder forms of mental aberration that occurred during that critical week in October, 1962. The tendency to equate America and Russia on every occasion can perhaps be explained against the general background of irritable anti-Americanism. More disconcerting for political observers was the failure to realise that for the Soviet leaders "peaceful co-existence" and "cold war" are but two sides of the same coin. The Soviet state is taken to be a kind of "traditional power," as if its foreign political goals and ambitions are limited, rather than extravagantly based on a belief in their global historical mission. This is the usual projection on Soviet and Communist policy of the empirical British approach.

The assumption is that somehow the world conflict concerns only Washington and Moscow, that other countries (such as Britain) have really nothing to do with it and should not be "drawn" into it. Was not the cold war the product of "professional cold warriors" on both sides? Could not men of good-will easily sort out the difficulties? If only the Security Council or the General Assembly were called upon to deal with the conflict! If only Kennedy and Khrushchev would meet face to face and thrash out their conflicts and misunderstandings!

This confusion probably found its most striking expression in the attempt to draw a parallel between Cuba and Turkey. It may take some time for the élite in a recently independent African or Asian country to adjust themselves to the realities of world politics. After all, this is a new and strange experience to people who in the past have mainly been preoccupied with domestic affairs. Nor, perhaps, should one be too critical of the good people who, at the height of the crisis, wrote letters to the newspapers to the effect that legally, morally, and ethically "Kennedy's action was indefensible" and that Khrushchev was "equally entitled" to blockade Berlin or invade Turkey or whatever else he might care to do. Most of them undoubtedly meant well. But what was one to think of professional commentators who at this critical time revealed in their articles that they had apparently never heard that politics were mainly concerned with power, that there was such a thing as a "balance of power," and that in the intensely contemporary power-politics there were few "rights," but at best certain "rules of the game." Mr. Irving Kristol, in an article published in the New York *New Leader*, a week before the Cuban crisis, anticipated much of the confusion that was to ensue:

> The trouble with those who flaunt those formal geographical analogies [between Cuba and Turkey] is that they ignore the existence of the Cold War. The world is not a single community and there is no supreme juridical sovereignty to define and allocate the rights of nations. In the conditions of cold war, one must take it for granted that each side will seize every opportunity to exercise its rights (as it sees them) to the best of its ability. Neither conscience nor reason prescribes that, each time we score a gain, we must figure out a way to suffer a corresponding loss. Such a prescription would amount to nothing more than a roundabout way of losing....

Curious, that though Turkey was so often mentioned, Finland never was. In the Paris *Figaro*, Professor Raymond Aron pointed out that historically this parallel was much closer since Finland had been at one time part of the Russian empire just as Cuba had been part of the American, whereas Turkey had always been independent. Russia had of course no "right" to regard Finland as part of its sphere of influence; this was just part of the rules of the cold war as set by Moscow. These rules provide that Communism will make a forward move from time to time which must not be resisted by the West; if, on the other hand, the people of a certain country revolt against their Communist overlords (as in Hungary, for instance; or perhaps to-morrow in East Germany) the West must on no account help them. These rules of Russian chess (or roulette) have the doubtless advantage that they will inevitably lead to a Communist victory. Public opinion in some countries has become so accustomed to them that the American refusal to abide by them and to prefer their own set (adapted perhaps from their national game of poker at which they are more adept) provoked pained surprise and moral indignation in many circles. Even some of those who conceded that the Americans had "quite a good case" hesitated to support it.

Thursday: Khrushchev has been to the opera, after having sent a letter to Kennedy. The Security Council deliberates. A Russian military attaché in Washington declares that the Russian ships will go through, but later messages suggest that some of them have changed course. U Thant cables Khrushchev and Kennedy asking them respectively to stop work on the rocket installations and to lift the blockade.

Mr. J. E. Mortimer of Twickenham writes a letter to the *Times* to the effect that America's action is wrong and very dangerous; Mr. S. Solomons of 82 Clare Court says that "President Kennedy's speech last night must fill sane men with horrified forebodings.... The whole affair smacks of electioneering and is in any case irresponsible ... plain hypocrisy...." Mr. Michael Raeside of Stanmore, Middlesex, writing to the *Herald*, is shocked by the American action not because it is morally wrong but because it is so obviously wrong

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that it is plain stupid: "They have played right into the hands of the Russians." Mr. J. Hart of Russell Road, Kensington, writing to the same paper, says that the U.S.A. has "forced her atomic bases" on Turkey, Western Germany, and alas, Britain. "It is therefore hard to understand or sympathise with her hysterical terror over Cuba." Sixty professors and other academic staff, headed by Professor David Glass (sociologist, London) sent the Prime Minister a letter saying it was imperative that Britain should "refuse to be drawn into a world conflict over Cuba."[3] A baby in a pram pushed by its parents headed a "No War Over Cuba" march through Leicester by 140 university students. The sixth form at Midhurst Grammar School, Sussex, on strike for the second day, declared that whether or not it would continue its studies on Thursday depended on the situation.

The *Daily Telegraph* had by now swung around to support Kennedy, though it noted that the "grave concern" at the American action expressed in the Labour Party statement was widely shared. The *Times* said the main problem now was "to find a way by which both sides can extricate themselves with some honour saved." Paul Johnson in the *Evening Standard* announced that Mr. Khrushchev had "... conceded diplomatic defeat—perhaps the biggest in his career"—but this was a lonely and somewhat premature voice. Both the *Express* and the *Mirror*, broadly supporting Kennedy, came out in favour of a "personal meeting" in which (the *Express* said) Macmillan could play an important part. The Turkey theme was further developed in a *Guardian* editorial: if the Russians wanted to dislodge the West from Berlin, no agreement was likely, but

> if their intended prize is the bases in Britain and Turkey then something might be done.... As a first step it might be arranged that the Soviet bases in Cuba and the American missile stations in Turkey are dismantled simultaneously under UN supervision.

Walter Lippmann in a column in the *Herald* supported the same proposal: "The two bases could be dismantled without altering the world balance of power...." Mr. Lippmann also chided Kennedy for not having confronted Gromyko the week before with the evidence on Soviet bases, thus having "suspended diplomacy."

A severe attack on President Kennedy came from Lord Altrincham in the *Guardian*. He found "fatal similarities" between the American President and Mr. Anthony Eden ("like Eden he is vain, ambitious, fundamentally lacking self-confidence . . . driven into an orgy of demagogy"). Kennedy had fallen into a trap, and small wonder Khrushchev had gone to the opera.

As for the *Daily Worker*, it continued to pour scorn on the alleged evidence about Soviet bases in Cuba:

> ... an act of madness unequalled in modern times. Having seen these pictures it is obvious why the U.S. did not consult its allies before it plunged the world into this terribly dangerous situation. For only the lowest of toadies would have agreed in advance to support the U.S. proposal of risking nuclear war because of photographs such as these.

In many of the British commentaries there was a tone of strong suspicion that the photographic evidence had been contrived or doctored for "a gullible American audience." In fact, as the New York *Herald Tribune* revealed (November 1st), the photographs were actually released first in London by U.S. Ambassador David Bruce after he had been urged to do so by Prime Minister Macmillan "to help convince British public opinion...." According to Mark Arnold Forster, the *Observer*'s political correspondent, "The Ambassador, by all accounts, left the Prime Minister angry, depressed, and uneasy.... No one tried at all to conceal the Government's resentment. Britain, it was emphasised, was carrying no cans for Kennedy, not this time anyway...." He added (October 28th):

> There are still nostalgic feelings in some parts of Whitehall for the statelier days of Ike, the days when the man at the other end of the White

---

[3] "The United States' action against Cuba, whatever the truth of President Kennedy's allegations, opens what threatens to be the first phase of World War III. At this moment of extreme crisis, it is imperative for the people of Britain and for Her Majesty's Government to state in the plainest terms that they will refuse to be drawn into a world conflict on this issue."

Among the signers were A. J. Ayer, T. B. Bottomore, Dorothy Cole, H. J. Eysenck, Meyer Fortes, Hilde Himmelweit, Nicholas Kaldor, Peter Laslett, Charles Madge, Joan Robinson, A. J. P. Taylor, Richard Titmuss, Raymond Williams.

Several days later a number of professors and lecturers at London University deplored the impression created that "University opinion in this country is willing at the first sign of crisis to attribute the worst of motives to the United States." Among the signers: Hugh Seton-Watson, H. C. Allen, Julius Gould, Leonard Schapiro, Agnes Headlam-Morley.

When it became known that the Glass statement had actually been signed by some 600 members of University staffs, the Battle of the Petitions continued in the correspondence columns of the *Times*: "... This statement has been widely assumed to reflect the opinion of university teachers in general. As there are more than 12,000 university teachers in this country, the number of signatures is evidence rather of the energy of the statement's promoters than of any widespread acceptance of its contents. We fully support the right of individual citizens who are university teachers to express their opinions on this or other political issues. But we trust that it will not be assumed, either at home or abroad, that this minority is representative of the profession as a whole."

This letter (12 November) was signed by (among others): Alan Bullock, A. L. P. Norrington, John Sparrow, Max Beloff, Roy Harrod, Robert Blake, Donald Macrae, Michael Howard, Norman Cohn, and Martin Wight.

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House telephone (if he wasn't playing golf) was an old and trusted colleague, who had commanded armies instead of a motor-torpedo-boat. Did these young men, it was being asked on Tuesday, know what they were doing? . . . It [the Cabinet] just hasn't trusted Kennedy-on-Cuba since the melancholy episode of the landing at the Bay of Pigs. . . ."[4]

The *Worker* cited Emanuel Shinwell and Fenner Brockway for their denunciation of the U.S. action as a breach of the UN charter. Mrs. Ruby A. Ord of 114 Dartmouth Road (in a letter to the *Evening Standard*) wanted to know exactly what the difference was between American and Russian arms. The "Mothers Against War" organisation sent a cable to Pope John XXIII (STOP KENNEDY NOW). And Mr. Raymond Challinor from Hindley near Wigan asked (in the *Guardian*), "Can it be that some strange magical power makes American nuclear weapons an agent of peace while Russian nuclear weapons are an agent of war?" Three children at Truleigh Hill, Shoreham, were kept from school, and their father explained (*Herald*) "I feel we should all be together at a dangerous time. . . ."

ON FRIDAY, October 26th, *Tribune* wrote:

> The debt which the world owes to Bertrand Russell may—if sanity prevails—be greater than anyone thought possible for one man. His dramatic intervention in the Cuban crisis . . . has apparently given the world at least a breathing space.

This opinion was shared to a certain extent by the *Daily Worker*, though other observers considered the effect of his activities was highly problematical.[5] Cassandra, in the *Daily Mirror*, called Lord Russell's activities one of the "ludicrous aspects of the crisis":

> He is blatantly anti-American and servilely pro-Communist and in the course of these querulous cables, managed to say that if Khrushchev did what Russell asked him his name would be blessed and that Khrushchev's "continued forbearance was our great hope."

Lord Russell, in the course of a long and distinguished career as a philosopher, has often commented on politics. Some of his *obiter dicta* have been truly prophetic—such as his predictions in 1920 about the Soviet Union. On other occasions he has been quite wrong and one can only be thankful in retrospect that his advice was not accepted by Western statesmen—as, for instance, when he called for non-resistance to Hitler in 1938 (*Which Way to Peace*, London, 1938):

> When disarmament is suggested it is natural to imagine that foreign conquests would inevitably follow. . . . This is a mistake as the case of Denmark shows. . . . [The Danes] are defended by their very defencelessness. . . . If they [the foreign states] did not [leave us alone] we should have to yield without fighting, and we should therefore not arouse their ferocity. The consequences both to ourselves and the world would be infinitely less terrible than the consequences of a war, even if it ended in complete victory. . . . If a German were to write a history of our rule in India he would easily establish to the satisfaction of the Germans that our love of democracy is humbug. . . . I do not say that all this would be just, but it would be no more unjust than the view that many British anti-Fascists have of Germany.

There is an interesting recurrent pattern in Russell's political activities. He could have argued in 1938 (as he could have done again in 1962) that he stood for "non-resistance" regardless of consequences. Instead he preferred, then as now, to belittle the possible effects of a Fascist (or Communist) takeover and to whitewash the totalitarian dictators. At the height of the crisis Lord Russell said he believed "that Mr. Khrushchev replied to him because he recognised that he was genuinely neutral and non-partisan" (*Daily Worker*, October 29th). Not long before this Russell had called the "murderous" Western leaders "worse than Hitler." A comparison of the texts of his cable during the crisis is instructive:

To KENNEDY

YOUR ACTION DESPERATE. THREAT TO HUMAN SURVIVAL. NO CONCEIVABLE JUSTIFICATION. CIVILISED MAN CONDEMNS IT. WE WILL NOT HAVE MASS MURDER. ULTIMATUM MEANS WAR. I DO NOT SPEAK FOR POWER BUT PLEAD FOR CIVILISED MAN. END THIS MADNESS.

To KHRUSHCHEV

MAY I HUMBLY APPEAL FOR YOUR FURTHER HELP IN LOWERING THE TEMPERATURE DESPITE THE WORSENING SITUATION. YOUR CONTINUED FORBEARANCE IS OUR GREAT HOPE. WITH MY HIGH REGARDS AND SINCERE THANKS.

In the middle of the crisis Lord Russell also prepared a leaflet, called YOU ARE TO DIE (quoted below). It was printed (*Observer*, November 4th) by the Cuban Embassy in London at its own, presumably non-partisan, expense. Observers could only conclude that Lord Russell and his group had moved very far from their original position in the Ban-the-Bomb campaign. Was anybody any longer quite certain whether the marches and demonstrations were in favour of Cuba's right to the bomb or against

[4] On October 31st, Mr. Macmillan said in the House of Commons: "As before in great crises, so in this one, there are always the weaker brethren in our midst. Happily they have not prevailed." But it was not clear whether he was referring to brethren in the country or in the Cabinet, or both.

[5] The Oxford historian, A. L. Rowse, writing from Pasadena, California, later challenged Lord Russell's view that mankind owed a "profound debt" to Mr. Khrushchev for agreeing to dismantle the Soviet missiles in Cuba. "But who put them there? By the same argument mankind owes this threat to world peace to Premier Khrushchev for putting them there. So the pronouncement of the famous mathematician cancels out on either side and comes to precisely nothing. . . ." (*Guardian*, November 5th.)

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nuclear war? Some of the most vocal protestants and demonstrators certainly created the impression that they would rather have the world blown up than have a single hair of Castro's beard singed.

In the very beginning the Ban-the-Bomb campaign had been just what it said. Lord Russell had, of course, been quite right in his acute realisation of the horrors of atomic war, and probably also correct in his assumption that the world may be heading for a catastrophe unless the present deterrent—the balance of power—is gradually replaced by disarmament based on a new international order. Some of those who refuse to listen to him may well be opposing him for "the wrong reasons," namely through lack of imagination. But a theoretical statement of principles obviously did not suffice. The Committee of 100 (as well as the CND and similar groups abroad) had to think about "practical ways and means" for the realisation of their aims. Hence their decision to opt, as a group, for "neutralism." For many of its members this was not much of a turning-point since they had been neutralists anyway. But as it subsequently transpired, neutralism was only a half-way house; critics felt that the movement came to show far more sympathetic understanding for the one side than for the other in the global conflict. Having made their basic decision, they were drawn into the whirlpool of world affairs and were caught up in various issues (*e.g.*, opposition to the Common Market) which had little if anything to do with "the preservation of world peace." They also attracted a fringe group around them which, by its antics, shaped to a large extent the image of the movement in the public eye. It was all very well to complain of the "smears of Fleet Street," but was it fair to blame reporters for noting the bohemian flamboyance of the nuclear disarmers?

Anti-Americanism gradually became an end in itself. They preached "sanity" and "neutralism," yet what did they practise during the crisis? A sane policy would have demanded, above all, limiting the new conflict and preventing its further spread. But Lord Russell evidently found nothing wrong with the establishment of missiles in Cuba:

> I asked Lord Russell to comment on President Kennedy's reference to "burglars" in his reply. "It is quite ridiculous," was Lord Russell's unequivocal response, "he is the burglar because Cuba was threatened and she sought protection." (*Daily Worker* interview, October 29th.)

The "protection" of Cuba by nuclear missiles thus became more important than the cause of world peace.

A truly neutral attitude would have demanded careful weighing of the evidence during the period of the crisis, but all that *Sanity* (the organ of the CND) did was to compare the aerial photographs of the missiles sites to the latest action paintings from Paris, to denounce the CIA, and to find excuses for Fidel Castro. Lord Russell dismissed the evidence out of hand:

> I don't accept them [the photographs] as evidence because they were taken by an interested party. (*Daily Worker* interview, October 29th.)

The Soviet statements he accepted unquestioningly; the Soviet Union, apparently, was not an interested party.

On Saturday, October 27th, several London newspaper offices received a communication from Misses Pat Arrowsmith and Wendy Butlin who had been among the most active members of the Committee of 100. It denied the report that they had been on holiday during the Cuban crisis:

> It seemed to us that nothing useful could be achieved by ordinary people within twenty-four hours to avert this event [the clash between Soviet missile-carrying ships and the U.S. blockade]. We decided therefore to go as swiftly as possible to a place where we could possibly survive a nuclear war—the west coast of Ireland.

Nobody could deny it was an honest statement.[6]

The first Soviet ship, an oil tanker, was stopped on Friday, October 26th, and then allowed through the blockade. Work on the missile ramps continued and in Washington "further measures" were being contemplated. Messrs. Stevenson and Zorin clashed in the Security Council. Khrushchev accepted U Thant's appeal, and Kennedy also indicated willingness to enter negotiations.

Sixty girls at the Glanmor (Swansea) Grammar School staged a protest walk-out against the blockade. Three students at Swansea Teachers' College were on hunger strike until President Kennedy agreed to meet Khrushchev. The National Assembly of British Women led by Councillor Peggy Middleton (of Greenwich) sent a cable to Mrs. Jacqueline Kennedy: "BRITISH WOMEN IMPLORE YOU INFLUENCE YOUR HUSBAND LIFT CUBAN BLOCKADE NEGOTIATE PEACE." Mr. Otway McCannell (Moor Park, Farnham, Surrey) in the *Herald*: "How dare our Foreign Secretary pledge our support for this American outrage?" Brian Osborne, in the *Times*: "Sir, President Kennedy's yesternight's speech brings a refreshing breeze of simplicity into international politics. If the U.S. has missile-launching bases at home or abroad, that is good. If another nation does it, it is bad."

Mr. Richard Crossman, in his weekly *Guardian* column, volunteered to extricate Kennedy as quickly as possible from the mess. He compared Kennedy's action with Sir Anthony Eden's at Suez, thought that Kennedy wanted to impress the American voters, and felt certain that Mr. Khrushchev has already won a "priceless advantage." The only "cheerful aspect": "The refusal of the British press to swallow our official propaganda." Lord Lambton (in the *Evening Standard*) also feared that Kennedy had walked into a trap (the real

[6] But an Irish letter-writer to the *Guardian* (November 3rd) could not help recalling the words of Brave Slattery who had also retreated to the Irish Sea:

Then up spoke Noble Slattery
And thus addressed his men,
I'm not as bold as a lion,
But I'm braver than a hen,
And he that fights and runs away
Will live to fight again.

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danger was in India, not Cuba). The *Guardian* continued to press for the dismantling of Turkish bases as an obvious way out: "From such an arrangement the Russians would gain the removal of the threat geographically closest to them. The Americans would gain the same." The *Times* remarked that

> Comparisons between the Cuban and Turkish bases are hotly and quite rightly resented by most Americans. The history and the whole context are indeed difficult. Even so a case can be made for banishing offensive missiles from each base.

The *Worker* denounced those

> who wonder why the Cubans won't agree to proposals for "inspection" (*i.e.*, spying) or to the U.S. demands that the weapons they regard as necessary for their defence should be withdrawn.

ON FRIDAY most of the weeklies are published. *Tribune* had a banner headline: THE WAR CRIMINALS. It did not believe for a moment the allegations about Cuban missile bases:

> I would be willing to lay a large amount of money that President Kennedy's discovery of Russian rockets is in the same category as Mr. Thorneycroft's "sensational disclosure" [of Russian arms in the Middle East during Suez].

Tribune goes on to compare Kennedy with the German *Fuehrer* and says that a pretext is needed for every invasion. But it also offers yet another explanation of Kennedy's motives:

> Election fever is rising in the United States. It may well be that Kennedy is risking blowing the world to hell in order to sweep a few Democrats into office....[7]

Tribune went on:

> No British Prime Minister, we trust, not even the present one, would order the turning out of the Palace Guard on evidence from so unreliable a source as the CIA....If they [the missiles] are being installed...then it may be assumed that Khrushchev has taken leave of his senses and has completely abandoned the military policies which he has been at such pains to defend and define.[8]

A reader could not help being struck by the *Tribune* account of the Soviet missile bases as compared with the one given in the satirical weekly *Private Eye*:

> To the ordinary peace-loving reader it may look just like an ordinary clump of trees in any old field. Which, of course, is what it is. But the trained observer looks beyond the simple peace-loving blades of grass, the few freedom-hungry sheep. For when this picture is blown up 24,000 times it shows nothing less than an enormous underground missile site. On neat racks lie hundreds of nuclear missiles, each one carefully labelled with the name of an individual American city and the words "Made in Russia."

Private Eye is a funny paper, *Tribune* is not.

The *New Statesman* that week, reflecting its new political eclecticism, had something for everybody. It denounced President Kennedy's "irresponsible warmongering." Both Lord Russell and Kingsley Martin argued that West Berlin could not and should not be defended. The front-page editorial saw some mitigating circumstances for Kennedy: "Assuming" the photographs are authentic, "the Russians stand accused of an act of provocation unprecedented since the onset of the Cold War." But the *Statesman*'s political correspondent, conveniently exaggerating, said that in British opinion, the American attitude to Cuba

> has always seemed a mixture of the hysterical, the petulant, and the absurd, and there could hardly be a worse cause for a British government to have to uphold.[9]

He regretted that the Labour Party statement was not more strongly anti-American. Mr. Karl Meyer, the paper's Washington correspondent, was even unwilling to credit the realistic drama of the events and reported that in the capital one had the feeling that a

> bad Allan Drury novel is enacted in life, and that all the characters are acting to form—like clockwork manikins.

Mr. Peregrine Worsthorne, on assignment for the *Sunday Telegraph*, found the Washington atmosphere rather more Shakespearean and found room in his dispatch for allusion to *Henry V*: ("Gentlemen in England, now abed...."). Shakespearean surely was the atmosphere in London where an ultra-sensitive *Guardian* reporter, attending a performance of *Troilus and Cressida* at the Aldwych Theatre ("with invasion and bombing in the headlines outside"), registered a "deepening hush" at the lines:

> *Then everything includes itself in power,*
> *Power into will, will into appetite;*

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[7] According to an article by George Gallup in the *Herald Tribune* (November 12th), written after the Democratic electoral victory on Tuesday, November 6th, "The Cuban crisis did not have any real effect in changing votes. A Gallup Poll in early October—before the President's decision to quarantine Cuba—showed that an election at that time would have produced much the same results as actually did occur."

[8] Khrushchev had indeed said (at the Baltic port of Szczecin, July 17th, 1959): "It is vital that the Baltic becomes a sea of peace. The Soviet Union has no ground for differences with her Baltic neighbours...and I hope they will do everything to prevent their countries from becoming bases for nuclear weapons." But the parallel with nuclear weapons in the Caribbean, the *Sunday Telegraph* observed on October 28th, would probably be rejected: *"Autres temps, autres mers."*

[9] The *New Statesman*'s monolithic "British opinion" was in point of fact somewhat less so. An *Observer* writer said (October 28th): "Most non-Americans have taken the position for two years now that Americans were making the Castro molehill into a mountain and fools of themselves. We should now admit that on at least four important points events have proved us wrong...."

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And appetite, an universal wolf,
So doubly seconded with will and power,
Must make perforce an universal prey,
And last eat up himself....

"Too close for comfort," a woman is said to have said as she brushed past him at the end, making for the exit and the late news bulletin.

The *Spectator*, also published on Friday, could only note prosily that it is

> on occasions like these that anti-American lunacy flourishes. Those who assume the impossible worst on every occasion have already started their ululations.

SATURDAY, October 27th: "U.S. THREATENS NEW MOVE AGAINST CUBA.... MISSILE BUILD-UP GOES AHEAD 'RAPIDLY,' TALK OF A NUCLEAR ATTACK, INVASION THREAT AS RUSSIANS RACE TO COMPLETE BASES." Mr. Harold Wilson said at Durham that it was essential to avoid anti-American fever or a wave of war-hysteria of the "blow-them-out-of-the-water" type. Both he and Mr. Gaitskell regretted that the U.S. should have reacted in the way it had; he thought it should have taken the matter to the United Nations. In Walsall, twelve-year-old Tanya Brayford got 75 signatures from schoolmates for a petition to Kennedy to "stop taking desperate action...." Lord Russell wrote: "You are going to die because rich Americans dislike the government Cubans prefer. Do not yield to ferocious and insane murderers." The Rev. T. N. Bush (the Cathedral School, Llandaff, Cardiff): "Official government statements on Cuba together with the pathetic hymns of hate against Russia lisped on Radio and TV by Lord Home, surely underline the vital need for a General Election" (*Herald*). A Leicester University student, 21-year-old Ian Mandleberg, on a hunger strike against the blockade, had not had anything to eat or drink for forty hours. Protest marches, "Hands Off Cuba" committees at London, Durham, Liverpool, Leeds, and Oxford Universities. John Gollan, Secretary-General of the Communist Party:

> [The world] will not be brought back from the brink until Kennedy is forced to call off the blockade... evidence of alleged nuclear missiles hurriedly produced by the notorious gangster CIA and swallowed whole by Macmillan and Gaitskell (*Worker*).

The *Guardian* editorial that morning was called "When to Break Ranks":

> The words coming out of the State and Defence Departments have an ominous ring. They suggest that if the Russians do not at least stop work at the missile sites with the existing equipment bombing or invasion may begin.... If it does come to that the British Government should make it clear that it must vote against the United States in the United Nations, just as the Americans voted against us at Suez. There are times when ranks must be broken if the cause that unites them is not to become meaningless.

The *Economist*, in its editorial "Cyclone Cuba," worried about the implications of "victory":

> Some Americans, but we hope not Mr. Kennedy, may be tempted to interpret these developments in what could well be a dangerously wrong way. They may be persuaded that by forcing a show-down over the shipment of Russian arms to Cuba the United States has publicly and triumphantly made Mr. Khrushchev back down, in other words, that the U.S. have achieved that decisive victory in the "contest of will"... the theory that represents Mr. Khrushchev as needing only to be convinced of American willingness to go to war, and he then will negotiate in earnest is too facile.

Professor J. B. Conacher, an historian from the University of Toronto, wrote to *The Times*:

> ...This present English detachment reminds me in some ways of American isolationism of the nineteen-thirties. In what other country, I wonder, would the reaction to this new danger threatening an ally take the form of publishing maps and cartoons pointing out the supposed similarity between American bases in Turkey and Russian bases in Cuba? This attempt to govern the cold war by the fair play rules that will serve on the playing fields of Eton is surely unrealistic and will only encourage the Russians.... Surely, Sir, at this grave moment, it is absurd and unjust to suggest that he [Kennedy] is merely playing a game of domestic politics. I do not believe that the people who raise these suspicions speak for England.

SUNDAY, October 28th: KENNEDY REJECTS RUSSIA'S "CUBA FOR TURKEY" DEAL, SAYS "REMOVE BASES FIRST" (*Sunday Times*). "Time is running out rapidly before a show-down" (Henry Brandon from Washington).

In "A Chance to Save the World," the Sunday reader of the *Observer* found:

> The chief blame... lies clearly with Russia.... An American demand for a standstill in Cuba would be justified and the Russians should be prepared to accept UN inspectors to prove it. But an invasion of Cuba now would be madness.... For the United States, too, must share some of the blame for the present situation.... Ever since the Russians developed atomic weapons, the Americans have consistently tried to over-insure against risk, to tilt the balance even further on their side.... Is it really insulting to suggest that the U.S. should give up her missile bases in Turkey as Mr. Khrushchev has now proposed?... He (President Kennedy) himself has shown courage in the highest degree. But the greatest courage and the greatest self-sacrifice may be for the Americans to give up their emotional longing to "win" the Cold War... which led even Mr. Adlai Stevenson last week to talk nonsense about a "world civil war."

Writing in the *Sunday Times*, Mr. Michael Howard (Reader in War Studies at the University of London) noted, "Strategists may explain the Rus-

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sian action and connoisseurs of Machiavellian policy admire it; but there will be few to describe it as wise." From "Where We Must Stand" (*Sunday Telegraph*):

> How well one knows the arguments, how chilling to pursue the parallels with another crisis 25 years ago . . . the face of appeasement is now Lord Russell's, but the clothes are Mr. Chamberlain's.

As for the Cuban-Turkish deal, it was one "every schoolboy would reject." If the Cuban sites were rendered harmless at once, one could then negotiate the withdrawal from Cuba and other Russian bases and from Turkey and other American bases.

On Sunday afternoon at four o'clock, London time, Khrushchev's letter announcing the unconditional removal of missile sites from Cuba was made public. In it the Soviet leader even expressed some of the "sympathy and understanding" that had been so conspicuously absent from so much London press opinion—"I understand very well your anxiety and the anxiety of the people of the United States in connection with the fact that the weapons . . . are in fact grim weapons. Both you and I understand what kind of weapons they are. . . ." Writing a week later, the *Sunday Times* (November 4th) argued:

> Last week-end in its leading article the *Sunday Times* argued that the Cuba crisis should be settled by negotiation, that the Cuba-Turkey offer was worth considering, and that the U.S. would not be justified in invading Cuba after that offer had been made. . . . By Sunday afternoon this had partly been overtaken by events. . . . A few readers have written with the advantage of hindsight—to ask if we withdraw the leader. We do not. . . .

"Mr. Khrushchev's latest message will be received everywhere with deep relief," the *Telegraph* wrote on Monday morning:

> It is by this attitude (not stating pre-conditions) . . . that Mr. K. merits the President's epithet of "statesmanlike." For there is in the Soviet leader's message a sign of something that can alone reduce tension between East and West: trust.

The Times was somewhat more sceptical:

> Not Mr. Kennedy's conditional promise but other considerations must really have swayed him. . . . In a sense it is Nikita Sergeyevich asserting himself against Mr. Khrushchev, the prudent peasant against the bouncing leader.

The *Guardian* also expressed "profound thankfulness," but added somewhat cryptically, somewhat ominously: "time has been won at a price which will not be known for some time yet." The paper was also very much concerned about Mr. Khrushchev's political future:

> Conceivably, after such an apparent reverse, Mr. Khrushchev will lose his place at the head of the Soviet government. If so, we shall probably not be any better off. . . .

Dismantled in Cuba, would the Russians now seek revenge in Berlin?

> If Russia had found the Americans soft in Cuba [wrote the *Express*] she would have been all the more encouraged to press forward in Berlin.

Mr. John Gollan, the C.P. General Secretary, announced that "Khrushchev's sanity and public pressure have won the first round." But, says the *Worker*'s editorial, the anti-American struggle has to be stepped up, "for the warmongering maniacs in the U.S. are unfortunately in powerful positions. Like wolves whose prey has been snatched from their jaws, they will become more vicious than ever. . . ."

The *Mirror* praised both Kennedy's and Khrushchev's statesmanship. The *Mail* was also moved to write, "We should join with President Kennedy in praising Khrushchev's statesmanship."

> We should also admire his courage. . . . Our view that Mr. Kennedy's new-found determination will help the West in Berlin is strengthened by the dramatic turn in Cuba. We have all been near enough to hell to smell the brimstone. It is for the world's leaders to make sure there will be no return.

WHEN THE WORST was over, there was time for more specialised scrutiny. At the telescope was an American professor (Louis J. Halle), who elegantly forgave his British cousins in perhaps the most generous piece of prose the week had produced (*Times*, November 2nd):

> Throughout the generations in which England bore the prime responsibility for defending our common civilisation, we Americans remained unaware of our dependence on British sea-power and, as detached spectators, enjoyed the luxury of lecturing the British on proper international behaviour. We scolded them for their indulgence in power politics, we raised our hands in horror when they worked for a "balance of power," and we admonished them to emulate the high idealism with which we conducted our affairs.
>
> Now that the prime responsibility has passed from the English to us the position is reversed. For fifteen years the spokesmen of India, raised like the rest of us on Anglo-Saxon idealism, have lectured us Americans on morality and the wickedness of power politics. Increasingly the English have been succumbing to the same indulgence. We were never so be-lectured. . . . Even when [the British press] granted that Washington had been justified in what it did to frustrate Moscow's attempted coup in Cuba [it] felt it necessary to remind those Americans that they were not yet purged of their iniquity, and to warn them that they were still expected to be on their good behaviour.
>
> This pharisaism, which belongs to all Anglo-Saxondom, is irresponsible because it is based on the world as it should be, while responsibility has to be discharged in the world as it is. Moreover, it has one implication which, in the present circumstances, I find unjustifiable: that President

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Kennedy and his advisers have less understanding of international realities and are less aware of moral considerations than those who feel it their duty to lecture them.

I do not ask that criticism of American policy and American behaviour be bridled. It is indispensable, and I would have it as freely practised in England as in America itself. I ask merely that it be conceived as criticism among fellowmen who are essentially equal in the limitations of their common humanity, rather than as the instruction of irresponsible children by those who know best.

At the microscopes again were the Kremlinologists from whom almost nothing had been heard. True, Marvin Kalb had actually found a man in Moscow who would speak frankly with him (*Sunday Times*, November 4th):

As one highly sophisticated Russian, who certainly does not reflect the average Soviet viewpoint, told me to-day: "Stand firm on Cuba, and you will hold on to Berlin. Permit yourself the luxury of back-tracking, however slightly, and you will get real trouble in Berlin."

Somewhat less sophisticated, but almost equally unprecedented and even incredible, was the Russian who was cornered by another foreign correspondent in Moscow (David Miller, *Herald-Tribune*, October 30th):

A ranking Soviet military figure said to-night that the Soviet Union is prepared to settle the Cuban crisis without tying in the demands of Cuban Prime Minister Fidel Castro. . . . The figure, whose name cannot be disclosed, told Western reporters at a diplomatic reception that Premier Khrushchev's proposed swap of Soviet rockets in Cuba for American rockets in Turkey had been abandoned because of President Kennedy's stiff response.

He did say, however, that if the United States had launched military operations against Cuba an "inevitable" Soviet military response would have followed. He added that, in his opinion, the Soviet Union had believed an invasion possible, but had been taken by surprise by the quarantine.

The Soviet Union, he went on to say, had agreed to dismantle its bases in Cuba because of Mr. Kennedy's firmness in the face of a Soviet arms build-up within striking distance of the Americas. . . . The Soviet source said that the settlement of the Cuban situation cleared the atmosphere for negotiations on other pressing issues, but said the question of Berlin was entirely separate. The source said that Mr. Khrushchev had dispatched First Deputy Foreign Minister Kuznetsov to the United Nations to negotiate Soviet arms-withdrawal terms in such haste because the situation was dangerous and something had to be done in a hurry.

Asked about Mr. Castro's call for a United States withdrawal from its Guantanamo base, the source merely shrugged and responded that Mr. Castro would probably have to accommodate himself to the arrangement made between Moscow and Washington. . . .

But what of that "secret letter"? According to the *Observer* (November 4th):

The text of Khrushchev's message to the President on Friday night is still secret. It is said not to have been published by the Americans because of its violent and vituperative language. . . .

Rowland Evans in Washington suggested something quite different (*Herald-Tribune*, November 2nd):

So astonishing was the note—its emotional content, not its proposals—that the few officials who have read it are under strict orders to preserve its secrecy. It will not be published in the foreseeable future if ever. The reason is that it revealed the Soviet leader in an unnatural fever of excitement and dismay over the prospect that Mr. Kennedy's determination to dismantle the missile bases in Cuba might actually lead the world into nuclear war. . . . The letter arrived at the White House on Friday night, October 26th, but its receipt wasn't disclosed until twenty-four hours later when Mr. Kennedy answered it. In the interim—and this is one of the most puzzling aspects of Mr. Khrushchev's conduct—a second proposal came from Moscow. . . . The first letter, revealing the Soviet Premier in his extreme state of agitation, was never released in Moscow. The second, imposing the new condition [withdrawal from Turkey] was immediately broadcast by Radio Moscow. In his reply of October 27th the President all but ignored the second letter. . . .

Informed sources described the first letter as long, somewhat rambling, disjointed, and confused; a letter lacking any of the nice touches of diplomatic language. . . . According to those who have studied it, it was a high-pitched emotional appeal from a man who suddenly saw the world perched on the precipice of atomic war, and was quite frankly fearful of what might ensue. . . .

As for the refusal to make the letter public, it reflected Washington's "concern that it might be used by the old hard-line Stalinists against Mr. Khrushchev. . . ."

THIS PUT THE PROBLEM squarely into the laps of the old-time Kremlinologists, and Mr. Victor Zorza, a senior of the club, was to be found characteristically engaged in mind-reading between the lines (*Guardian*, November 3rd):

It is conceivable that the acceptance of Mr. Kennedy's terms by Mr. Khrushchev had not been cleared with all his associates. The attempt on Saturday to put stiffer terms to the Americans could well have been the result of pressure from those Soviet leaders who thought that Mr. Khrushchev had given way too readily. There is even some ground for speculation that Mr. Khrushchev, having been outvoted by his immediate associates in the Praesidium, who prevailed on him to send the letter about the Turkey-Cuba deal, then appealed to the fuller Central Committee of the Soviet Communist

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Party, which endorsed his own line, so that on Sunday Mr. Khrushchev was able to return to the terms he had outlined to Mr. Kennedy in the "secret letter."

The grounds for this speculation are provided in a seemingly routine article in Wednesday's *Pravda* by a group of "Old Bolsheviks"—a device that has been used during past crises to convey important information between the lines. . . . The claim here that the decisions were "taken" by the Central Committee can hardly be a figure of speech, and it implies that a quorum was hastily convened by bringing into Moscow those of its members who could be readily reached—and, perhaps, who could be relied upon to endorse Mr. Khrushchev's line.

Only once before has Mr. Khrushchev appealed to the Central Committee over the heads of his immediate associates in the Praesidium. That was in June, 1957, when the Praesidium majority grouped around Malenkov, Molotov, and Kaganovich had voted him out of the post of First Party Secretary. On that occasion Mr. Khrushchev was helped by Marshal Zhukov, then the Minister of Defence, who arranged with the Air Force the immediate conveyance of Central Committee members to Moscow.

Mr. Khrushchev then got his Central Committee majority, and, if one's reading of the signs is correct, he would appear to have got it now. . . .

The official Washington "demonologists" were evidently faced with the same puzzle, for in the full minute-by-minute reconstruction of the Cuban crisis by the huge and well-informed staff of the New York *Times* (November 6th), there is this:

> Which proposal was genuine and which merited a reply? The second letter was markedly different in tone and style from the previous Khrushchev communication. Had the Premier been overruled? Was he raising the ante? Or was he applying pressure by demanding a higher price if his private proposal was rejected? These were the questions before the [President's] committee. . . .

Only the astute Mr. Max Freedman reported the background to this fascinating and fateful letter. On October 30th he wrote from Washington:

> It has become known that President Kennedy sent a stern private letter to Mr. Khrushchev on Thursday warning him of the tremendous hazards which faced world peace, and the safety of the Soviet Union itself, if no speedy settlement of the Cuban crisis could be arranged.
>
> It was Mr. Khrushchev's reply to this message which led to the hope of a settlement over the week-end. The clearest explanation of what happened in the last few days has been given by one of the men who played a decisive role as a constant adviser to President Kennedy during the worst days of the crisis.
>
> He said that the technique followed by President Kennedy over the week-end could be summarised in these terms: a select group of reporters known to be friends of the President were given information which allowed them to write, with complete accuracy,[10] that the United States late Friday night was considering armed action, including the possible use of nuclear bombs.
>
> The next day the White House sent a Note to Mr. Khrushchev which was a masterpiece of diplomacy. In effect it ignored the Saturday message or treated it as a minor irrelevancy intended for bargaining. On Saturday Mr. Khrushchev suddenly suggested that the crisis be solved by trading the Turkish bases for the Cuban bases. What seemed to the world—which knew nothing of Friday's message—as a harsh statement of impossible American conditions was really nothing of the sort. It was in reality a summary and paraphrase of the proposals which Mr. Khrushchev himself had made on Friday night. . . .

But where Washington was involved in Anglo-Saxon political empiricism, London was engaged in flights of ideological metaphysics:

> Mr. Heath himself seized the attention of the House with a whole series of fascinating queries as to what the Russians had been up to in the Caribbean.
>
> Had they been trying to put themselves in a position to negotiate from greater strength? Was it all intended as a lever for Berlin? Was there an internal power group working against Mr. K.'s peaceful co-existence line? Had the Soviet been seriously misinformed about Western aims and Western determination? Had they been taking the anti-nuclear demonstrators too seriously? Did they think quite simply that the Americans would not notice? Did they reckon it a safe risk from which they could withdraw if need be?
>
> Or—the most remarkable speculation of all, it seemed—did Mr. Gromyko really believe the installations to be defensive, when the armed forces had in fact made them offensive?

The *Guardian*'s Parliamentary Correspondent continued (November 1st):

> There might have been other questions, but these were enough to be going on with. Here was a rich field of speculation indeed, and we all sat back to hear the lines along which the Lord Privy Seal's thoughts were working: for everyone was agreed that the vital thing was to learn the right lessons from the Cuban course in applied brinkmanship, and it was hard to see how any reliable lessons could be learned unless we had some authoritative working theory of how the whole thing came about. . . .

THERE WERE MORE second thoughts to follow. Mr. Walter Lippmann announced that at least some of his anxiety had been unfounded, since President Kennedy (unlike Wilson, Roosevelt, Truman) "kept open the channel of diplomatic communication" at the height of the crisis. His suggestion for a Cuba-Turkey exchange was now forgotten. It had apparently "infuriated the State Department who thought

[10] "Complete accuracy"? It was later divulged by the Defence Department that nuclear action had not in fact been considered and that the report was confided to the press for purposes of "psychological warfare."

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the Russians would interpret it as official kite-flying" (*Observer*, November 4th), and the Russians in fact did, for it was mentioned by Khrushchev in one of his communications.

Mr. Philip Toynbee, who had written to *The Times* protesting against American actions now expressed his disgust at the "wanton act of aggression committed by Russia in Cuba."[11] Lord Altrincham, too, thought he had been "too harsh" about President Kennedy. Mr. Joseph Alsop, who had written about the "lunacy" of action in Cuba, now headed his first post-Cuban column "Victory!" Others, though pleased about the final "outbreak of peace," opined that "defeat" might be closer to the truth, for the result, as Mr. Harold Wilson (always an imaginative man with balances) concluded, was perhaps "just what Khrushchev had intended it to be...." The *Guardian* now (November 9th) pooh-poohed Soviet attempts to save face, "trying to present as a victory, or rather as a tie, what everyone knows to be a defeat...." The *Guardian*'s Washington correspondent, Mr. Max Freedman, had already made quasi-editorial amends for "ranks-breaking" by writing (November 1st):

> All the risks which he [President Kennedy] took in the past few days were risks for peace, not incentives to war. If world opinion can appreciate that supreme fact, it will be able to judge American policy with fairness and with accuracy.

Freedman went on to say:

> Senior officials of the Kennedy Administration are saying that the British Government was by any test the most helpful ally, and this fact will not soon be forgotten by those who have to make the major decisions for the United States.

American correspondents writing from London made a somewhat different estimate of the results of the "test," as in Mr. Joseph Fromm's harsh cable to *U.S. News & World Report* (Nov. 12th):

> An American in London sometimes wonders whose side Britain is on. Among Britons who influence opinion and shape policy, the first reaction in the crisis was to justify Russia for putting missile bases in Cuba. These Britons were sceptical of U.S. charges against Russia, critical when U.S. didn't consult Britain or let the UN handle the whole crisis. Surprisingly few influential people saw establishment of Red missiles in Cuba as a challenge to the West, a threat to U.S. and therefore to Britain.
>
> Fear of nuclear war explains much of this British attitude. In fact, this fear has given rise to some desire to contract out of the cold war in hope Britain might stand aside if U.S. and Russia come to blows. This is also true: the British believe in compromise. It was this spirit Hitler exploited at Munich. During the Cuban crisis, it appeared that many of Britain's most influential people have yet to learn the lesson of Munich. As a leading editor told this correspondent privately the other day: "The moral for America is this: Don't listen to Britain in a crisis."

The post-mortem by Sir William Hayter (in the *Observer*, November 11th) was less harsh than Fromm, less sanguine than Freedman, as befits a veteran of the diplomatic high-trapeze:

> How do Anglo-American relations emerge from the squall? Not very well, I fear. The British Government seems to have behaved impeccably,[12] but the British public, or some of it, lost its head.... The two ladies who decamped to Western Ireland to avoid the bombs were wasting their time and money. These and other manifestations of British shakiness and weak nerves can hardly have seemed very impressive to the Americans.

Reporter

[11] In the New York *Herald-Tribune* (European edition, November 3rd), Mr. Toynbee confessed: "From midnight on the Monday of President Kennedy's speech announcing the blockade of Cuba, until Wednesday morning, I believed, and said, that the blockade was a monstrous and cold-blooded election stunt; that there were no Russian missiles on Cuba, and that the physical invasion of Cuba was the next step in this wicked United States plot. By Wednesday I had judged, from Russian reactions to the crisis, that President Kennedy had told the literal truth about the Russian rocket sites; and I was forced to make an immediate volte-face. ... Being a unilateralist disarmer of the most extreme type, I was outraged by the extension of nuclear arms and nuclear tension into a new area."

[12] The only public wobble, be it recorded, was tangled in the Byzantine intricacies of the *Guardian* office, where one of its writers had to write a letter to the Manchester editor to disengage himself from the imputation by a London editor that he was an authoritative source for said wobble. "I am not sure," writes Wayland Young (*Guardian*, November 6th) "your London Letter is right in its interpretation of Michael Foot's article in *Tribune*, namely that he 'quotes me in support of the theory' that on the worst night of the Cuba crisis Mr. Macmillan was considering how we could opt out. In any case, I had no inside information. What I wrote was speculation...."

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AUTHORS

Tibor Déry is the leading figure in contemporary Hungarian literature. During most of the Horthy régime he lived in exile. He returned to Budapest as a Communist, and in 1956 participated in the intellectual leadership of the October Revolution. He was arrested and sentenced to nine years' imprisonment; he was amnestied in 1960. "Reckoning" has just been published in Budapest and is his first new story since his release. (The English translation is by Dr. D. Mervyn Jones.)....

W. H. Auden's most recent book of poetry was *Homage to Clio*. His translation of Goethe's *Italian Journey* has just been published....

Graham Greene, playwright and novelist (*Our Man in Havana, A Burnt-out Case*), recently edited the works of Ford Madox Ford....

Ernest Gellner is Reader in Sociology at the London School of Economics and the author of *Words and Things*....

Randolph Churchill, author and journalist, has written biographies of Lord Derby and of Sir Anthony Eden....

Sir Herbert Read, poet, art critic, and author (most recently) of *A Concise History of Modern Painting*....

Lindley Fraser is Head of the German and Austrian Services of the B.B.C. and the author of *Germany Between Two Wars* and *Propaganda*....

Sir Bernard Lovell is Professor of Radio Astronomy at the University of Manchester and Director of Jodrell Bank Experimental Station. Among his books are *The Individual and the Universe* and *The Exploration of Outer Space*....

Kenneth Tynan writes on theatre for the *Observer* and has recently published *Curtains*, a collection of his dramatic criticism....

Norman Macrae is Assistant Editor of the *Economist*....

Michael Howard is Lecturer in War Studies in the University of London and author of *The Franco-Prussian War*....

Sir Hugh Casson was Director of Architecture for the Festival of Britain, and is one of Britain's leading architects and design consultants....

Kathleen Nott, novelist and critic, author of *The Emperor's Clothes, Private Fires, Creatures and Emblems*....

Terence Prittie is the *Guardian* correspondent in Bonn and author of *Divided Germany*....

William Plomer's *Collected Poems* were published in 1960....

Mark Abrams is President of the World Association for Public Opinion Research. Among his books are *Social Surveys and Social Action* and *The Condition of the British People*....

Mervyn Stockwood is the Bishop of Southwark....

George Mikes is one of Britain's best-known humorists, author of *How to be an Alien, Little Cabbages, How to Scrape Skies*, etc....

Frank Kermode is Professor of English Literature at Manchester University and author of *The Romantic Image* and *Puzzles and Epiphanies*....

Goronwy Rees is a novelist and translator. His reminiscences, *A Bundle of Sensations*, were followed by *The Multi-Millionaires*....

Arthur Koestler's numerous books will be well known to our readers. Among the most recent are *The Sleepwalkers* and *The Lotus and the Robot*....

Andrew Shonfield, former economic editor of *The Observer*, is now a director of the Royal Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House)....

Alastair Buchan is Director of the Institute for Strategic Studies and author of *The Spare Chancellor* and *NATO in the 1960s*....

Angus Wilson is the author of numerous novels; the most recent is *The Old Men at the Zoo*....

Anthony Wedgwood Benn (Lord Stansgate, or "The Reluctant Peer") was recently re-elected (but not seated) as M.P. for Bristol South-East....

Sir Kenneth Clark delivered "The Blot and the Diagram" as the first annual Reed & Barton Design Lecture at Wellesley College, U.S.A. His essay, "In Praise of Chagall and Kokoschka," appeared in ENCOUNTER, March, 1961.

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